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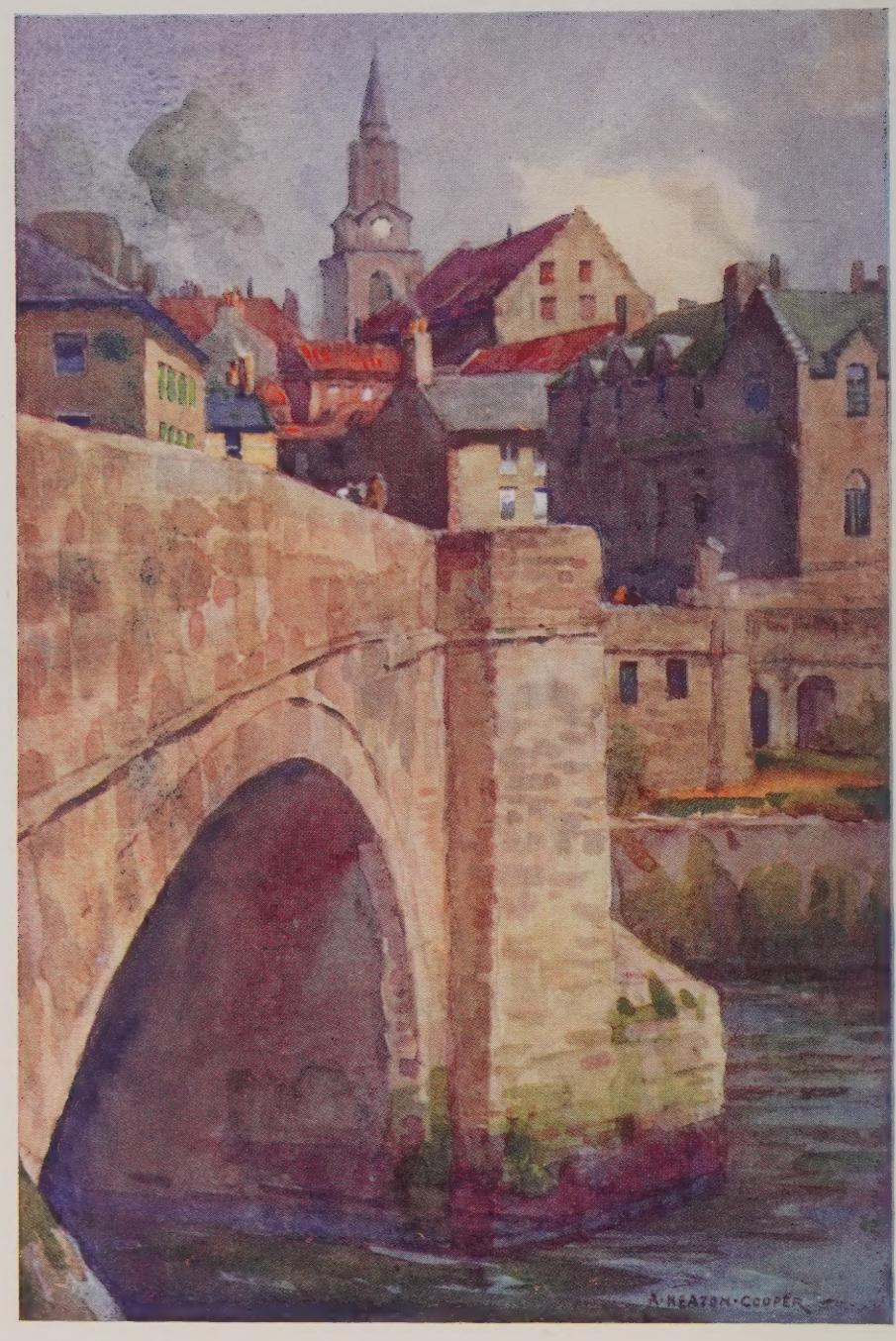

BERWICK-ON-TWEED.

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TO MY FRIEND

ADAM BLACK

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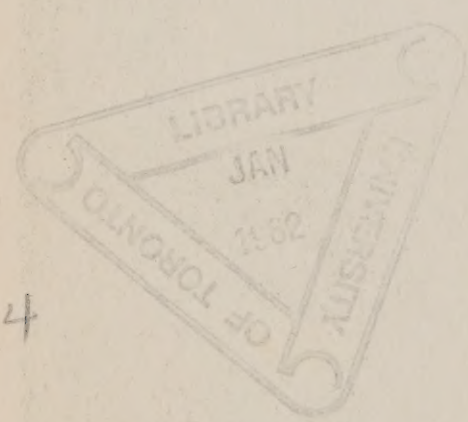
Up Adam's profession!
HAMLET.



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PREFACE

And the lady shall say her mind freely.
HAMLET.

THIS easy-going, loosely-knit record is not in any sense a serious contribution to the literature of Northumberland. It is a personal sketch, offered to Northumbrians in the hope that this picture of the county, as it is presented, will be deemed accurate in the general effect.

The making of colour books, for some occult reason, runs on the tramlines of tradition. The glory is to the artist who furnishes the illustrations, the fetching and carrying is for the writer, who is bidden to pay attention to history, folk-lore, customs, natural beauties, etc. But anyone with a sense of romance knows that the county of Northumberland offers a background which forces a colour-chronicler into something more than a stout peg for an artist to hang his pictures upon, and it is very sure that Northumbrians would not feel the immortal history of their corner of England could possibly receive justice at the hands of a mere tourist or fugitive journalist. "What," they will ask, "has Agnes Herbert to do with Northumberland? She is from the Isle of Man, surely?"

My maternal grandfather—of whom I shall speak later—was a Northumberland man, "born and bred in the briar patch." The tales of the Border and the

history of old times in his county were on his lips from my earliest knowledge of him to the day of his death in 1912 at the age of 94. He was allied with many of the Border families whose names have come down to us as "braw fichters," and an ancestor of whom I was never weary of hearing was one of the thousand "wild horsemen" from Alston Moor who fought under Dacre at Flodden and formed the only cavalry under the English banner.

My grandfather married a Welshwoman—hall-marked. And it has come to this: the few qualities possessed by me which are worth having, the fine attributes we ascribe to the natives of the North of Great Britain, I place to the credit of my North-umbrian grandparent. The traits of imagination (may I call it imagination?), diplomacy (may I call it diplomacy?), and sophistry (may I call it sophistry?) I lay to the charge of my Cambrian strain. Be this as it may, I surely have a vested interest in the great county of Northumberland. The part of me that "belongs" is writing this book, and that same part has the privilege to boast, as did my grandfather throughout his long and useful life: "I am a North-umbrian." So—

Steer me the ship, good pilot, steer
Where the Northern sea-birds fly,
Steer where the great grey skies stretch clear!
For I am a Northman, I!

AGNES HERBERT.

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By A. HEATON COOPER

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NORTHUMBERLAND

CHAPTER I

THE BORDER AND BEYOND

Northumberland, I hold thee reverently.
Henry VI.

"Ye tak' the high road and I'll tak' the low road,
And I'll be in Scotland afore ye!"

THE lilting verse has been responsible for helping along the general idea that the means of entering and leaving Northumberland at its northern frontier are limited. Most southerners never get beyond the assistance of the North-Eastern Railway, but for anyone contemplating the exploration of the vast areas of wilderness and heather-clad heights of the county there are many roads, good, bad, and indifferent, besides passes and tracks and fords, and they all lead the same way home. In common with other parts of England, Northumberland in summer is infested by chars-à-mort, by which apropos name I heard a Frenchman designate the modern juggernauts. The motor-car drove the cyclist off the

roads, and now the pedestrian has the order to quit. In narrow lanes and by-paths there is no room for him when the chars-à-mort pass along, and he takes his life in his hands two or three times a day. I was fortunate enough to gather my materials for this record from the safety and luxury of a good, stout, fear-no-foe-in-shining-armour motor-car, and on the day we left "gude C'a'stream toun" our objective, as my companion called it, was to seek out and thoroughly explore the battlefield of Flodden.

Coldstream, placed as though laid down inadvertently by some forgetful giant, on the left bank of the Tweed, which is spanned by a very fine five-arched bridge built in 1763-66, is closely connected with Border history. The ford at Coldstream, the first above Berwick of any account, was the principal crossing-place between Scotland and England. Edward the First entered Scotland, in 1296, by means of it; Montrose, in 1640, led the Covenanters southward by this route; and through the centuries army after army, English and Scottish, has used the historic water-way over which Sir Walter Scott sent the Lord Marmion and his followers.

The old toll-house on the Scottish side of the Tweed is still a reminder of the days when Coldstream was the Gretna Green of the East Border, and up to the year 1856, Coldstream, with the proverbial blacksmith—the high-priests of these old-time matrimonial shrines were always black-

smiths—was extremely popular with evaders of the marriage-laws, and especially so with law makers. Three Lords of the Woolsack, Brougham, Eldon, and Erskine, utilized the expeditious nuptial methods of Coldstream and Gretna Green.

Hereabouts—on the English side—we were shown the very spot where Robert Burns (like Linnæus, who knelt down at first sight of the English gorse), finding himself for the first time on English soil, took off his hat and repeated the prayer with which the "Cottar's Saturday Night" comes to an end. His diary says nothing of the charming sentimentalism; you must read between the lines. The record stands: "Coldstream—went over to England—Cornhill—glorious River Tweed—clear and majestic—fine bridge."

To the east of the Coldstream market-place is a house rebuilt upon a site whereon stood the cradle of the Coldstream Guards. The inscription upon it reads: "Headquarters of the Coldstream Guards, 1659, rebuilt 1865." Here General Monk spent the winter in raising the regiment, and from here the famous unit, the oldest but one of all our British regiments, marched to glory after glory.

Across the bridge, and we are, as a modern Tyne-sider would say, on the "Ing-a-lish" side of the Border. From the top of the rise where you leave Coldstream behind I was endeavouring to find a line of demarcation. And there was none. What did I

expect, I wonder? I had thought that Scotland must give way to a recognizable Northumberland. But no, the difference was not apparent! The sheep grazing alongside the roads which shone like pewter in the sunshine, were the comfortable, well-fed beasts of the Lowlands—how different from the anxious creatures of the wild Highlands, with their beak-like noses grown sharp that they might feed between the stones. There were the same small, round haystacks in the haggarts, too, a dozen or more together, with their ragged skirts extended, standing, as always, like a group of rather dishevelled coryphées.

And as we motored along he kept an inquiring thumb upon the guide-book where it said: "Flodden: the hill in Northumberland where James the Fourth of Scotland was slain by Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey"—"he" being an American and rich. But riches in the New World grows into a habit, and so the American did not boast. Perhaps—just a little—about his car. We can excuse that, for he had brought it over with him, and it was not a Ford.

Somewhat adrift in our bearings, we stopped and pulled out the maps for the twentieth time. We were on Twizel Bridge, on the same high gothic arch over which Surrey's guns and vanguard crossed the "sullen Till."

Slow and quiet, but deep and dangerous is the Till as it curls in and out in grotesque contortions down

the vale past Ewart, Millfield, and Flodden, and onwards to Ford. The headwaters of the Till are known as the Breamish, and there—as its British name, "breme," rough or rapid, "uisge," water, indicates—it has none of the sombre placidity of the lower reaches when the tumbling burn becomes a river, as it does just above Chillingham.

The scenes of the first and second and most of the sixth cantos of *Marmion* are laid in Northumberland, and the Till, like many another Border river, was much beloved by the great Border poet.

As I stood looking down into the strong stream running through a deep ravine on its journey to the Tweed, I watched the grayling dart hither and thither and scatter as a piece of shelving rock, undermined by winter floods, toppled over with a dull plop! And the bloodthirsty old rhyme, which had delighted me in the days of my youth, flashed into my memory:

> Tweed says to Till,
> "What gars ye rin sae still?"
> Till says to Tweed,
> "Though ye rin with speed
> And I rin slaw,
> Where ye droon ane mon
> I droon twa."

A murderous fragment, but—isn't it charming?

Robert Chambers told us that he first heard the well-known verse from the deep voice of Sir Walter

Scott, "when it seemed to me to possess a solemnity approaching to poetry."

Against the closely packed woods the dark battlements of Ford stood etched, and away to the north-east we traced the clear-cut edge of Barmoor, where Surrey camped on the night before Flodden. From thence he marched westwards by Duddo and Heaten to Twizel Bridge.

Our map introduced the American to Jamie. It was in the blank moment of his despair when the chauffeur stood pointing in the wrong direction and grinning in the horribly suggestive way chauffeurs have, that, quick as the god from the machine, appeared his saviour, a sandy little Northumbrian-Scot, freckled and rough-skinned, and a head of tousled hair like an O-Cedar mop.

Never was a child so thoroughly abreast of a situation. "I'll tak' ye to Flodden," he whispered sepulchrally—"I'll tak' ye to Flodden. The map's no richt!"

No dialectician need take me to task for making Northumbrian Jamie use the vernacular of Scotland. The Northumbrian Border dialect is largely that of the Scottish Border, and as there are Scots characteristically Border-like, so there are Border Northumbrians with the speech, attributes, and habits of their ancient enemies. Indeed, many Border Northumbrians are more like the Scots than the Scots themselves. Putting aside the invariable use of such terms as

"bonny," "canny," and "hinny," "coad as deed" for "cold as death," "that ilk" for "that same," and other current expressions, Northumbrians of the simple classes never use the word "thou." It is "ye," as in Scotland. Yorkshire and Lancashire say "thou." "A' didna cäätch tha näame," they say, meaning: "I did not catch thy name."

Lying on my desk beside me as I write is a little sixteenth-century book called *A Dialogue both Pleasaunt and Pietifull*, by Dr. William Bullen, and there is in it a story full of a strange fragrance, which illustrates my amateurish theory. The old dialogue introduces one of the many men broken on the Border, and he comes into the picture as a beggar at the house of a London merchant. In repeating the Lord's Prayer, which was the reverent prelude to an appeal for alms, the beggar substitutes "Your Kingdom come, Your willes be done," for the familiar "Thy." The merchant, overhearing it, says to his wife: "Methinke I doe heare a good manerlie Beggar at the doore and well brought up, how reverently he saieth his Pater noster, he thous not God, but yous him. I pray what contrie man be you?"

The beggar replies: "Savying your honour, gud Maistresse, I was born in Redesdale, in Northumberlande, and came of a wight ridying sirname called the Robsons, gud honast men and true, savying a little shiftyng for their living."

"What doest thou here in this country? Me thinke thou art a Scot by thy tongue."

After this digression I must get back to Jamie. But, first—"savying a little shiftyng for their living"! It's *rather* nice, isn't it?

Jamie was more hindrance than guidance, and it was not his fault that he and the American did not speak the same language. Jamie did not set much store by Flodden, for his father had fought in Flanders, and we were not at all surprised that we were led to a handsome cross erected in 1910, a prototype of many recent memorials, inscribed "To the Brave of Both Nations." But the American had not come so far to reverence modernities.

Flodden hill is no longer the bare height of ancient days: it is tree-crowned, and on the slopes and in the fields we saw the gleaners stooping over the sheaves as though enacting a scene for a film play of one of Millet's pictures. It was the most peaceful, most rural spectacle. Difficult to believe that these acres once staged a ghastly battle round which has gathered more tradition, legend, ballad, and poetry than any battle since Homeric days! As Ritson, the antiquary, says: "No event in English history has produced a greater number of poetical effusions." Of all such, ancient or modern, Sir Walter Scott's *Marmion* takes pride of place.

The haunting ballad "The Flowers of the Forest," and the thrilling lament of the pipes, have no connex-

ion with woodland beauties, as very many southerners still believe. They wail for the men of Ettrick who, in the flower of their youth and strength, fell at Flodden. The wonderful ballad was written in the eighteenth century, but its leading features are so ancient, and the peculiarities of its style are so markedly of another epoch, that the consensus of opinion is that the old lament enshrines a genuinely ancient ballad, cleverly metamorphosed.

The Border country for centuries was never clear of the feuds which smouldered on like half-dormant volcanoes, to break out at intervals into some wild explosion of blood and destruction. There were numerous Anglo-Scottish fights on an even bigger scale than that of the Battle of Flodden, but no fight has ever cut so deeply into a nation's heart. Its knight-errantry, its failure, its romance, its deathless courage, placed Flodden on the short roll of immortal combats. And, like the Great War, it was a battle of young men. "I never read," says Lindsay, "in tragidie nor story at ane jounaye so many nobles slain for the defence and life of their soverane." The catastrophic fight wrought havoc in the great families of Scotland, and all historians have agreed that disastrous Flodden threw Scotland back a hundred years.

My American, with something of the inquisitive ghoulishness of little Wilhelmine, bothered me to tell him all about the war and what they killed each

other for. It was disconcerting to realize that he had sought out Flodden merely because it is a show place. It meant nothing at all to him. So, in words not my own, I expounded history, searching for fitting language and occasionally finding it.

The chauffeur (from Ohio) listened to the two of us with infinite satisfaction. He nodded his head impartially when Scotland made a hit, also when England scored. He was intensely enthusiastic when I got out my *Marmion* and looked up the scene where James comes into action.

"*Some* King!" he said admiringly.

And then I had a new view of our chauffeur. Hitherto he had proved himself merely distant, austere, and not a little uninterested. But at sight of Flodden he looked up sharply. His figure straightened. His eyes shone. He was an anachronism—an American who loved war. In effect, as he told me, fighting was his ideal existence. What a battle-ground! And what price Flodden in comparison with Flanders! I pointed out the discrepancies, but Fleming—a fine old Border name, by the way—was peculiarly and hotly combative. This attribute he preserved throughout our tour. He drove us willingly to any battle-ground, but was frankly bored with the landmarks of peace.

In some dusty recess at the back of Fleming's mind there was a vague impression that a sea-fight, which took place between the sons of Lord Surrey

and Andrew Barton, a Scottish naval officer, half pirate, half bandit, was in a great measure the cause of the Battle of Flodden in which James the Fourth was killed.

James the Fourth established the first navy worth calling such ever possessed by Scotland, and towards the end of his reign he had thirteen men-of-war, one of which, the *Michael,* was, in her day, a huge ship. And in Andrew, or Andrea, Barton, a man of courage and resource, Scotland had a commander who gave the young Scots navy all the prestige it needed, and that meant something to a nation which, up to the period of Sir Andrew Wood and Andrew Barton, had never achieved anything outstanding upon the sea. Both were first-class men at their job, and seamen, unlike landsmen, do not succeed by chance. Chance may toss a seaman into a position of power, but if he does not possess capacity he can never hold the place.

Barton, of course, was a sea-rover, and a pirate in his methods, though he acted under letters of marque, and piracy of any sort or kind, on the water or on the land, was a recognized and characteristic Scottish institution until a much later period.

We come now to the naval action off the Goodwin when the brothers Howard, sons of Thomas, Earl of Surrey, and subsequently second Duke of Norfolk, fell in with Barton, brought him to action, and, after a determined fight, killed him and took his two

ships, the *Lion* and the *Jennet Perwyn.* The old ballad has it that the *Jennet Perwyn* was sunk with all hands, and that the Howards took only the *Lion*, but Herbert's *Life of Henry the Eighth* says that both ships were added to the English navy, and were brought into the Thames on August 2, 1511.

Barton had been engaged under letters of marque upon reprisals against the Portuguese, against whom he nourished a justifiable grievance, but on the pretext of cruising against the Portuguese he plundered a few neutral ships, including English ones, and vigorous complaints were made to Henry the Eighth. Surrey, on hearing them, declared that "The Narrow Seas should not be so infested while he had estate enough to furnish a ship, or a son capable of commanding it." His words would seem to indicate that he fitted out the two ships which were commissioned to deal with the piratical adventurer, as Colliber states was the fact.

Stowe says that the *Lion* struck to Lord Thomas Howard, but it was Lord Edward, or Sir Edward, as he is commonly called, who received Andrew Barton's whistle and chain of gold nobles. The ballad tells of Barton's use of a whistle to direct his men, and this whistle-badge of office is an interesting feature of the trappings worn by Lord High Admirals, commemorating, as it does, the death of the famous Scottish naval adventurer.

This affront, as James the Fourth chose to consider

it, rankled, as did the attitude of Henry when James brought the Barton affair to discussion. "Punishing pirates," King Henry said, "was never held a breach of peace among princes." Undoubtedly the event served as the principal pretext for the invasion which ended at Flodden, although other prejudices, superstitions, and ignorances tended to inflame racial enmity, and to add to them, James's old allies, the French, urged him to fight England on English soil.

In 1513, James was forty years old, and he had reigned well and valiantly for close on twenty years. He loved war. Summoning his people to rally round his standard was to him the apotheosis of romance. The great force, estimated at from 60,000 to 100,000 men, which was destined to be scattered at Flodden, gathered at Edinburgh on the Borough Muir, and marched out by way of Soutra Hill, down the Leader to the Border, and so to Coldstream, and over the historic ford. The Tweed crossed, the Scottish army besieged the episcopal fortress of Norham, and the castles of Wark, Duddo, Etal, and Ford.

Stately Ford, "full of solemn feudality," was built about 1286, and here James dallied awhile—unauthoritative history says that the beautiful Lady Heron had something to do with the unsoldierly inaction—thus giving the English time to march north.

No matter how much battering the hoary fortress has suffered, the little that is left finds it glory to

have stood in the century of Flodden. The "King's Tower," with its "past of war and pageants," still broods over the battlefield like an eagle, and in the upper portion, in the "King's room," are the Royal Arms of Scotland, with the inscription: "King James ye 4th of Scotland did lye here at Ford Castle A.D. 1513."

In frightful weather the Scottish host alternately marauded and plundered, and meanwhile the veteran Surrey, with pomp of artifice and excellence of design, massed his host at Newcastle. From every side fine fighters answered the call to arms. Yorkshire provided regiments of bowmen, and the picturesque master of Border forays, Dacre, led the famous raiders from the Cumberland fells, and a thousand horse from Alston Moor. The Stanleys with their great following from Lancashire and Cheshire, which included the archers who were to turn the battle's tide, formed Surrey's strongest arm. Every fighting man of Northumberland joined the English banner, also a formidable episcopal force under the Bishop of Durham.

Surrey reached Alnwick on August 30, and here his army was further reinforced. Historians, whose contradictions form the staple of their intellectual existence, estimate the English force at about 30,000 men.

From Wooler Surrey sent a herald to James conveying the usual quaint injunctions and reproaches of

the period, and James sent another and another, and so was bandied to and fro the knightly language of chivalry. Admiral Howard, Surrey's son, "soldier and sailor too," forwarded a cock-a-hoop challenge in which he gloried in having killed Andrew Barton, and summoned any man in the Scottish army to avenge the pirate.

James's divisions were dwindling. The Scots of old, as the Scots to-day, value fortune according to the quantity of work necessary to produce a certain quantity of goods of any kind whatever. It was toilsome to amass plunder, and riches secured at great cost must be placed in safety. Numbers of Highlanders, Lowlanders, Islanders, Borderers faded away, but as all historians are careful to emphasize, the *fine fleur* of Scotland remained with the King. They were representative of all parts, under every Scottish noble of importance, and brigaded with them was a French company under Archibald Douglas (Bell-the-Cat).

> That roll of names
> Who followed thee, unhappy James,
> Crawford, Glencairn, Montrose, Argyle,
> Ross, Bothwell, Forbes, Lennox, Lyle,
> Foredoomed to Flodden's carnage pile.

By a clever and risky ruse Surrey outmanœuvred the Scottish intelligence department, which had decided that Surrey had marched towards Berwick, and lo! here was the English host coming from the northward, *and on the Scots' side of the Till.*

> From Flodden ridge
> The Scots beheld the English host
> Leave Barmoor Wood, their evening post,
> And heedful watch'd them as they cross'd
> The Till by Twizel Bridge.

Froude says: "The poet is the truest historian." It was thrilling, under the guidance of *Marmion*, to place the armies and watch the English closing on Branxton ridge, lying north of, and parallel with, Flodden hill, upon which James had erected his standard.

We speak of "Flodden," but the decisive battle was fought on Branxton ridge. For that reason the English for centuries called the famous struggle the Battle of Branxton, in much the same arbitrary fashion in which the *Daily Mail* decided to christen Jutland by a name of its own, and thought to carry it. Both reckoned without the dust-heap known as history, especially Scottish history. Our best history is still poetry, as the impression of the name Flodden on the mind vividly proves.

Our chauffeur "guessed King James had the dice loaded." So, to put it crudely, he had. The King held the crest of Branxton hill—Surrey's force extended over the northern foot; and he had the better men, skilled fighters renowned all over Scotland, well-fed warriors, too, and the English had been on starvation rations for days.

And so with sticks and stones we laid out a battle-field in miniature. Admiral Howard, a highly polished

bit of agate, led a collection of gorse brush, which represented a portion of Stanley's men from Lancashire, their thorny frontage eloquent of their disgust at serving under the hated banner of Howard. A gnarled lump of whinstone played Thomas Howard and his men from the northern counties. Then Dacre, gallant Dacre, surrounded by his thousand horsemen from Alston—a rose seemed typical of him. Sir Marmaduke Constable, Surrey himself, we denoted by stalks of heather, and so on through the list, and thus, to our fancy at least, the fray began.

On Edward Howard the first Scottish onslaught fell; the weak column held for a space, wavered, and gave. Dacre and his Alston cavalry stemmed the tide, and for four ghastly hours the battle swayed this way and that. The Admiral, still thirsting for single combat, called on the King again and again. Great Crawford stepped out in his Sovereign's name, and the two warriors fought with battle-axes until the Scottish earl fell cleft almost in twain. Rothes, in his desire to succour his kinsman, was killed by a Percy, who fought on the Admiral's right.

Somehow the picture that appeals to me most vividly is the vision of the King, with his long red beard floating in the wind, leaving his horse, and divesting himself of his shoes in order to get a firmer grip on the slippery hill grass.

At times one warning trumpet blown,
At times a stifled hum,
Told England from his mountain-throne
King James did rushing come.

And now in the frenzied fight with bills and axes that centred round the Scottish King the question was never of surrender, or the more usual ransom; "no thought was there of dastard flight."

Stanley's archers enfiladed the Scots on flank and rear, raising the slogan "Stanley! Stanley!" The old ballad tells us:

And though the Scots at Stanley's name
Were 'stonished sore, yet stout they stood.

When night fell, and night alone put an end to the sanguinary conflict, both armies are said to have remained on the field. The English certainly did, but of the Scottish host—

There, Scotland, lay thy bravest pride—
Chiefs, knights, and nobles, many a one.

King James is said by some historians to have fallen upon Piper's Hill, by others on a site now built over. As was the custom in those barbaric days, when nothing was wasted, the bodies of slain warriors were stripped of all they wore, and it was not until late on the next day that the naked form of James the Fourth, grievously slashed by bills and arrows, was found and recognized by Dacre, who had seen the King in life.

The corpse was sent by Dacre to Berwick, where it

was embalmed, and since the King had been "curssyd wt candyll, boke, and bell" for not joining the continental league set on foot by Pope Leo the Tenth and his predecessor Pope Julius, in which Henry the Eighth was a mere dupe in the hands of his father-in-law of Arragon, Christian burial was refused to James by Surrey, who sent the body to Sheen, where it reposed in a sheet of lead until Sheen shared the fate of other monasteries at their general subversion, when it was tossed about the monastery from room to room in the most unceremonious manner. Stowe's annals record: "Some idle workmen for their foolish pleasure hewed off the head, and Lancelot Young, master glazier to Queen Elizabeth, finding a sweet smell, due no doubt to the spices with which it had been embalmed, issuing therefrom, took it home with him, but ultimately caused it to be buried in the charnel-house of St. Michael's, Wood Street."

CHAPTER II

THE MUCKLE CHEVIOT

O Douglas, hadst thou fought at Holmedon thus
I never had triumphed upon a Scot.

Henry IV.

Who will not chance a raven.

A Midsummer Night's Dream.

Around Wooler, a mere nothing as regards distance from the battlefield of Flodden, rises and undulates the grandest scenery of the Cheviot range. Each hill stands out boldly against the next in line, in marked difference from the long ridges—we should call them "downs" in Sussex — into which the Cheviots decline as they widen out into their characteristic foothills and wastes south-westward and disappear into the Tyne. From the standpoint of Wooler the hills look much finer than they are, and many bold summits, curving away right and left, appear almost as lofty as the big Cheviot with its distinctive hog's back. A succession of rounded cones streak northward out of our vision, and form a rampart wall behind which other heights of the range thread in and out.

The Cheviots have never been mistakenly termed

mountains. They have been hills ever since the Great Craftsman turned them out. If they are not hills, then they are crags, or knowes, or cantles, or peaks. There are poet's names amongst them, and many that hold a bookful of stories. Scotsman's Knowe, and Kelpie's Strand—there is meaning in such appellations, for all that the Immortal One told us one name is much as another.

In the days of my youth a map showing the Cheviots was suddenly required of me, and I remember painstakingly filling in an oasis of white paper with a sort of backbone of a herring which represented, to my mind at least, a ridgy range of the Border Hills with one foot in Scotland and the other in England. Here, in some of the valleys, my fancy established the romantic Faas, or Gipsies, of the Border, whose stories and traditions were so familiar to me. Others I peopled—with a fine disregard for time and the centuries—with the "braw fichters" whose herds lived in a chronic state of being seized and driven off by the Scottish raiders, and recaptured and driven home into Northumberland again. Langlee Crags I always reserved for smugglers of Scottish whisky, which had to be conveyed into England past the most Argus-eyed Excise officers. Donald M'Donald had a special little blot on my map which signified his rude hut. I saw it a hundred times in my mind's eye, constructed as it was of turf, wooden spars, and rushes, and in a corner, a bed of

dried heath placed with the tops upwards, the right and only way to make a heath-bed. "Tonal' M'Tonal'" was an attractive adventurer at the close of the eighteenth century, and stood at the head of his profession. He led the restless and anxious life of a smuggler for several years, and made much history in the Cheviot valleys.

The Romany people still hold for me something of their mystery and romance, and those of us who have come upon patches of scorched moss and grass, the remains of fires, and other traces of the nomadic race, always feel the curious indefinable thrill of the unknown. There is nothing really romantic about these "idlesse all," who "till not neither do they sow," but like all wild products of the soil they have the allure of it.

In Northumberland the name Faa has become generic, and the gipsies are invariably called Faas. Faa, which is the principal name among the northern gipsies, is supposed to be the corrupt pronunciation of Fall, and it is of great antiquity in Scotland. Going back to 1540, we have the quaint proclamation issued by James the Fifth, requiring all sheriffs to assist John Faw, "Lord and Erle of Littill Egipt," in executing justice upon "his company and folkis conforme to the laws of Egipt, and in punissing of all thaim that rebellis aganis him."

There is nothing very much to tell you about Wooler, save to record that it was burnt down about

1722 and "arose fairer from its ashes." Its main interest to-day is sheep and "taken' in vis'tors"—by which expression nothing derogatory is intended. Summer visitors were created to be taken in.

A century ago, when the Cheviots grazed almost as many goats as sheep, it was the fashionable thing for invalids and imaginative would-be invalids to go to Wooler for the "cure" of goats' milk whey. Hither came young Grace Darling as she was failing in health, and in 1791, Sir Walter Scott, writing from Langleeford, six miles from Wooler, to William Clerk of Edinburgh, says: "'And what the deuce are you about there?' methinks I hear you say. 'Why, sir, of all things in the world, drinking goats' milk whey.'"

The lodgings of Wooler at that date had not reached the sybaritic comfort claimed to-day for them, which is the reason why Wooler cannot immortalize one hostelry more than another. Standing as the town does hundreds of feet above the valley of the Till, we should call the place a hill-station in India. Seen from a little distance it hangs on the slopes of the Cheviots like a bee on a heather bell.

In the immediate neighbourhood of Wooler, ancient and medieval entrenchments, cairns, and camps are numerous, and all are murmurous with the clash of arms and hoary legend. Everywhere over this area are the relics of Border savagery, which began and ended on a note of demolition. Time and

again we flung ourselves out of the car to inspect ruinous pele-towers, fortified houses, and battle-torn castles toppling to a fall. Tumuli and circles and moss-grown altars, unmarked on maps, but plain to be seen, were come upon in the great waste places, and gave the Flodden district an air of dignity impossible to set down on paper.

Humbleton—or, as it was known in old days, Homildon—one of the small hills of the star-neighbouring rampart of the Cheviots, has the outline of a circular camp, and behind it is a cairn-crowned height with a camp that has provided unlimited interest for antiquarians. Humbleton is celebrated in history as the scene of the battle between Hotspur, who had with him the Scottish Earl of March, and ten thousand Scots, the vanguard of a much larger force under Earl Douglas. March was the Scot who, in disgust at the lack of good faith shown by Rothsay, heir to the Scottish throne, retracted his oath of fealty, and did homage to the English King and joined fortunes with the redoubtable Percys of Northumberland.

In a turnip-field, by the high road, stands the battle stone which marks the historic spot where Hotspur and March defeated the Douglas. It was a great fight, fit to stand by the Cæsar of Flodden, and it led indirectly to the Battle of Shrewsbury, where Hotspur fought side by side with Douglas. Times and again a Percy and a Douglas opposed

each other. A Percy would violate the laws of the Border by crossing into Scotland to hunt without leave of the Scottish Warden of the Marches, or a Douglas would commence a conflict in the Cheviots. In the *Chorographia*, printed in 1649, we read: "These Cheviot hills is most famous for the hunting of the Earle of Northumberland; at the hunting, the Earle Douglas of Scotland, who met him with his forces and engaged one with the other, where was great bickering and skirmishing, to the loss of many men; where both earles fought valiently, called to this day Cheviot Chase."

The name of Hotspur must ever typify English chivalry if the perseverance of poets, dramatists, essayists, and historians can give immortal lustre. He received the sobriquet from the Scots whom he met in periodic affrays. One of the numerous explanations of the *nom-de-guerre* is that he "was called by the French and Scots Harre Hatesporre, because, in the silence of the night, and while others reposed in sleep, he would labour indefatigably against his enemy as if *heating* his spurs." A second solution runs: "He was first armed when the castle of Berwick was taken by the Scots in 1378, when he was fourteen years old, and from that time till the Battle of Holmedon his spur was never cold."

It is clear to all how well Shakespeare loved "this Percy out of Northumbarlande." With a poet's licence he made Henry Hotspur, who was born

in 1364, of exactly the same standing as Henry, Prince of Wales, born in 1387, in order that King Henry might cry:

> Oh, that it could be proved
> That some night-tripping fairy had exchanged
> In cradle clothes our children, where they lay;
> And call'd mine, Percy, his, Plantagenet!

I am digressing, and that badly. I was on the subject of the battle stone. Similar memorials are to be found in all parts of Northumberland, and naturally enough all commemorate the victories of the English. The Humbleton stone, however, is distinguished from the rest by reason of a curious local tradition which was prevalent even so late as the seventeenth century. It was thought that the sun rose and set by this stone, and without pausing to consider astronomical difficulties, as is the way with your real poets, the country-folk were convinced that as the sun sank below the horizon some mysterious magician swung the battle stone to face the east in readiness for the dawn.

June, 1402, saw the coming event casting its shadow before Homildon. A Scottish army under Hepburn of Hales crossed the Border, and after a successful series of lootings and forays the force was brought to battle by the Earl of March at Nesbit Moor, and the Scots were badly beaten. Hepburn was killed, and many illustrious knights were taken prisoners.

When the news of Nesbit Moor reached Scotland,

Archibald Douglas, on whom had been bestowed the estates of the disaffected March, called on all fighting men to avenge the defeat, and the banner of the Douglas was immediately supported by ten thousand picked warriors, and this in spite of the fact that the Earl, "valorous as a Douglas," was held by his countrymen to be dogged by ill-luck and to be lacking in military sagacity. Indeed, by reason of his frequent calamitous defeats his nickname among his own people was "Lose-man," and occasionally "Tyne-man."

The Douglas force raged like a devastating wind through Northumberland, right up to the walls of Newcastle, and from thence the Scotsmen quartered the country, plundering and looting. Meantime March, with the Earl of Northumberland and his son Hotspur, got together a large army, which waylaid that of Douglas near Millfield. The Douglas, for once belying his character, knew enough strategy to recognize that Homildon Hill made the strongest of positions, and he seized it. The Percys and Earl March, with the body of Welsh archers gathered by Hotspur in his Cambrian sorties, occupied the ridge of a neighbouring hill, Akeld, but historians now discredit this and maintain that the English, bent on attack, massed at the foot of Homildon.

The picturesque story goes that Hotspur was urging his horse up the brae when March took the bridle, and, forcing the charger back, advised the use

of archers alone, which advice was taken with quite incredible results. There was nothing remarkable in the fact that the Welshmen routed the Scots: the Welsh archers until the time of Edward the Third were the only bowmen who touched perfection. What was astonishing was the way in which the Douglas held the summit of the hill. Instead of scattering his men, or charging down upon the gnats that stung, as did Bruce at Bannockburn, Douglas arrayed his army in their ranks, and as they stood upon the terraced hill they made a target such as old-time bowmen dreamed of but rarely obtained. The Scots fell in piles, every arrow found a lodgment, and still the Douglas stood firm. We have the story of the valiant knight Swinton, who, unable to bear the inactivity longer, cried out: "Oh, my brave fellow-soldiers, what fascinates you to-day that you stand like deer and fawns in a park to be shot, instead of showing your ancient valour and meeting your foes hand to hand. Let those who will, descend with me, and in the name of the Lord we will break that host and conquer, or, if not, at least die with honour, like soldiers."

And then followed one of the chivalric interludes for which there was in old days time in all battles. Adam Gordon, Swinton's deadliest enemy, hearing the stirring call, fell upon his knees before his hated rival, and begged "the bravest and greatest in Britain," to accept the services of a humble follower.

The two, friends now, descended, and with the Douglas and his spearmen prepared to close with the skirmishers around the hill. And as Douglas rode down an arrow pierced him through his armour so that he fell from his horse and was captured. Presently the débâcle was complete. Five hundred Scots were drowned "in the Tweed," the old records say, but the Tweed is a goodish way from Homildon; and many illustrious chieftains, including the Earls of Moray and Angus, became prisoners of the Percys. The gallant Sir John Swinton, Adam Gordon, Roger Gordon, Ramsay of Dalhousie, Walter Sinclair, and Livingston of Callendar were among the slain.

And here I am going to change the gloomy subject and explain to southerners how the word Cheviot is pronounced. No longer must you go into shops and unblushingly demand Cheviot tweed. It is "Chiviot." Don't forget—*Chiv*iot. And the name is said to mean "Snowy Ridge."

Daniel Defoe climbed "the muckle Cheviot," and, with his usual generosity of language, said the hill was two miles high. Well, it is the loftiest on the Border, but it is not two miles to its marshy top. The summit is 2,658 feet above sea-level.

For myself, I was anxious to ascend the big Cheviot —which is not in the least difficult and is merely a question of staying power and hard walking—and I wanted to hang by my eyelids on the sides of the deep fairy-haunted cleft, known as the Hen-hole, where, in

some years, a snow egg may be seen at Midsummer. They say—the all-knowing mysterious "they"—that if you are near the weird chasm at just the right moment, on just the right day, you will hear the horn of the hunter who, when chasing a roe up the slopes of Cheviot, was lured by a mountain fairy into the sombre glen.

A naturalist friend promised to show me near the Hen-hole in the one day wild goats, a raven, and a peregrine falcon. I need not give his name, for there is only one man in all Northumberland who could make and keep such an engagement. Do you know there are wild goats on Cheviot? Not tame animals turned shy, but goats that have lived wild and fended for themselves for generations, and thereby have acquired grand heads and horns and challenging eyes as unlike the staring timidities of the tethered goat as can be imagined.

We explored the romantic Hen-hole on the first likely day, and climbed and fell among the precipitous boulders whilst the American made a sketch—and not a bad one either—of the frothing burn which goes by the name of Colledge Water, as it rushed brown and golden to the mossy rocks at the outlet of the cleft in the hillside from whence it scurries northward to join the sullen Till.

The day was getting on, and the promise was redeemed only in so far as the raven and the peregrine falcon were concerned. The necromancer took it

calmly. The pageant of the wild goats would be forthcoming at the right moment. Meanwhile he improved the shining hour by telling us something of the habits of the birds, and said that in his experience the raven always nests close to a peregrine falcon's eyrie. The association of the species is very noticeable and somewhat curious, as they are apparently very unfriendly, and constant skirmishes take place. The raven is not to me the *rara avis* it is to many people, and as I heard the deep and menacing "Cruck!" so different from the inward sounding "Kung!" of spring-time, I went back to a long-gone day when I knew of fifteen nesting-places of the raven, all on rocks, and almost all on the coast of the Isle of Man. The Manx poet, the Rev. T. E. Browne, used to tell a charming folk-lore story about ravens which, he said, accounted for leap-year:

"The big raven kills the lambs in February. How to serve him out? 'Leave that to me,' says March; 'give me three of your days, and I'll punish him.' So three days are added on to March, and the raven is first induced by the mild breath of spring to build his nest, and the young are hatched, when behold! the three February days of bitter cold, and the raven brood perish. But how about leap-year? 'Aw,' said my informant, 'ye see, the March just gives February one day back now and then for a free gift, or gift over and above what is due.'"

In the peregrine falcon, which displayed its fine

flight as conspicuously as any naturalist could have wished, I have a vested interest. The kingdom of Man was granted to Sir John Stanley in 1406, on the service of rendering two falcons on paying homage, and two falcons to each future King of England on his coronation day, this presentation being last made by the Duke of Athol to George the Fourth in 1821. "Amongst the feudal services, the two falcons from the Isle of Man were conspicuous. Seated on the wrist of his Grace's hawking gauntlet, the beautiful peregrine falcons appeared with their usual ornaments. The birds sat perfectly tame on the arm of his Grace, completely hooded and furnished with bells. The King descended from his chair of state, and the ladies of the Court pressed round to caress and examine the noble birds."

The last "coronation falcons" were taken from the cliffs of Maughold Head, which has been regularly occupied season after season. Nest sites, both in Northumberland and other places, are doubtless more numerous than is supposed. I know of six or eight which are in the midst of, or close to, considerable colonies of sea-birds. The peregrine, as is well known, makes nothing of a nest, and is rather fond of furbishing the ruins of a last season's nest of some other bird.

We toiled over what seemed to me like pyramids of titanic rocks, down gigantic masses of contorted whinstones, and so at last to a terrace plateau where

we could wait and watch for the goats. Hours we sat, silent and numbed by the cold, hoping that the wild things would give us a glimpse of them. And as I forgot the flight of time, the vapour clouds descended into our cleft, which caused my guide much concern. He advocated giving up the search for the day and redeeming his promise on the morrow. But I espied a rocky gallery over our heads. "The goats will pass there," I confidently remarked. But my naturalist would have none of it. Impossible, he said; the goats never ran in that direction. Why should I seem so convinced that they would?

> I have no other but a woman's reason.
> I think him so because I think him so.

This puzzled him more than ever. He was a true Englishman in requiring a woman always to have a reason. The American knew better than that. Why should a woman always have a reason? A reasonable woman is stealing something from man's prerogative. I hate a silly woman, but I like a woman to be natural, as God made her, and if He happened to make a few of them reasonable, very surely He never meant them to air the faculty.

In a clatter of stones the wild goats rushed round the gallery, led by a lordly patriarch with a grand head. Ah, they have winded us! They bunched, went forward, changed their minds, turned back, and were round the shoulder of the bluff and out of sight quicker than it takes to write it. I daresay that the

stalking of these wild goats of Cheviot, wary and agile as they are, would provide as excellent sport as a man would get much farther afield, and call into play every quality of finesse and endurance that a hunter of any worth possesses.

When ascending Cheviot we followed Harthope burn to Langleeford, and then struck upwards over stony channels where it was evident, in the winter season, strong streams came down. Overhanging scrub bushes grew so close and thick that at times nothing but the faintest tinge of blue told us that the sky was there. And beneath the musty smelling arch we stumbled and picked our way, oddly silent, as though we were besieging some fortress that asked for stealthy approach. Across the dry meeting of the waters of several streams we crept up the green tunnel, and presently the winding aisle led us through a luxuriant fern-belt where fronded forms of russet and green tossed in the light breeze. Here a curious natural history phenomenon presented itself. A hare came rushing down the water-way to meet us, and, sighting us, became so paralyzed with fear that it could not move. Our chauffeur, who was ahead, seized a stone, and was about to use it, when I called for mercy. With a tremor the hare regained the use of his frozen limbs, and in a sidelong springing jerk was off into the wilderness. A hare cannot see directly to his front, owing to the conformation of his eyes, and this had helped to place him at our mercy.

When we emerged from our green tunnel we were a long way up the hillside, and on a heather-grown slope of moor grass, dotted with the silky white tufts of the fairy-like cotton grass. It was, or at least my American said so, the watershed ridge of the Cheviot.

I think "watershed" such an enigmatical word. It is a conjuror, too, and brings before our eyes things it is not and can never be. I like Mr. Belloc's definition—a child could understand it. "All countries," he says, "are built in vast planes, which lean up against one another, and have ridges between. The great rivers run in the hollows where these planes meet at their lowest, and the watersheds are the lines along which their top edges come together."

We were on the top edge of the Cheviots!

The highlands were dotted with numberless sheep, shorn now of the fine wool for which the breed is famous. They were fine-looking beasts, with clear bright eyes, and I was told by an old shepherd, who passed in array a few of the wonderful things his dog could do, that the Cheviot sheep never gets "the rot." There were almost as many crows on the ground as there were sheep, and the shepherd spoke of the care that is exercised in early spring to keep the birds off the lambs, some of which are attacked and killed each season.

The hog's back of Cheviot rose above us still.

The turf grew slippier, and we all took a different line of ascent that we might not be involved in a possible slide down.

The weather-beaten rocks were ornamented with the brightest of lichens, yellow, ruby, and blue. A root of the rare dwarf cornel lay in our path for the digging up—it is growing in Ohio now—and I saw little tracts of reindeer moss and the scarlet-crowned cup-lichen.

Now and again I heard the imperious ringing call of blackcock, and as we gained the flat summit of Cheviot, a fifty-acre expanse of bog country, I looked back and saw with great delight the flight of a solitary blackcock as he plunged, *in medias res*, from a rocky pinnacle. The first downward swoop carried him far out from the hillside, and then, all suddenly, the idea seemed to strike him that he didn't know in the least where he was going, and it was quite possible he might never get there. He curved his neck and tucked low his powerful rudder tail until it reached the correct steering angle, when he made for the hill again.

Threading our way between expanses of quaking bog and treacherous soft mosses, bright with turf blossoms, we found a grey cairn bleached by the weather. Two of these tumuli mark the summit of Cheviot, and very many are scattered over the subsidiary hills of the chain. The average tourist accepts them as all in the day's climb, but the old cairns are

held by many antiquarians to be sepulchral heaps, and so form matter for conjecture. Are they of British origin, or are they the burial-places of Saxon settlers who fell in their struggles to wrest this soil from its ancient tenants, or are they memorials of some great deeds or battles in Border history?

I had thought to look down into England and over into Scotland, for the Cheviot tops every other hill between the Highlands and the mountains of the Lake District, and I could have done so but for the fact that the wind at this altitude was never in the same mood for ten minutes together. It breezed up a miasmatic haze over the central bog, which presently developed into a mist and enveloped us in the masses of cloud which presage rain and storm, and form a portion of the meteorological lore of the observers of Wooler.

> When Cheviot gets on his hat,
> An' Hounam-law, her hood,
> A' the wives of Kale and Boumont,
> May expect a flude.

It was disappointing, but in the sure and certain hope that the pallid mists would clear we settled ourselves behind a stone that by the aged look of it had seen history in the making.

To be on the top of a mountain—even a small one—as the mists are breaking is to be a child once more,

with all those nameless, mysterious, irresistible attractions about one which so rarely come again. The feel of the keen air, the scent of the dewy grasses, the plaintive note of the plover as it struts over the moss, the desire to "see the other side" of the hill-top, is all a part of the childish glamour that lures you on, and calls and beckons.

The mist was rolling off, crushing its foamy banks into a compact mass. The wide plateau revealed itself once more, dull-toned and bare, and rather ugly in its desolation. Then, as we watched, almost as though a magician's wand had touched it, the receding vapour took on a rainbow of tints—golden, rose-colour, purple. The sloping bog-land, hummocked with heaps of grass old and new, lit up and gleamed in a filmy, gossamer web of light moisture. Charming to see, but damp, very!

And at the lifting of the curtain the stage was set. The pathless North Sea spread purple-blue to a far horizon where little play-ships rode unmoving, or so they seemed to me; and the sweeping coast-line from Bamburgh trailed off towards Berwick and northward into ghosts of shores. Southwards, inland, away and away, lay the green uplands of Durham. To the north the Lammermuirs dominated the landscape, and north-west the Eildon hills, sacred to Scott and Abbotsford, caught the sun's last rays, and held them awhile. Afar to the west and south-west the conical summits of many hills indented with each

other in lofty wildness. I knew what lay behind their well-guarded mystery—glens, such as we had just traversed ; quavering streams, tinkling over bright-coloured pebbles, scarce sounding their presence until with smiles and songs they tumble out to join real burns. And everywhere the heather and the gorse commingle.

We remained on our little acre of Cheviot's many until night fell, having heard of the glorious scene presented by a panorama of Northumberland under the moon. No words that I can use could do justice to the titanic amphitheatre silvered as I saw it that October night—it was as lovely a sight as this country offers. But what seemed yet more beautiful to me was the luminous sparkle of the swampy moorland as we descended the side of Cheviot. We were shod with will-o'-th'-wisps. Our feet pressed the decayed vegetation which teemed with phosphorescence, visible only in the dark, and our shoes were aflame. The old people in Northumberland call the moss-light " wild-fire." Is it not a poet's name? It is a sad anticlimax to have to record that Fleming, the chauffeur, spoke of the enchanting sparkle as " a stunt."

It was difficult, in the midst of so many spots worth visiting, to select our next exploratory trip. The bloodthirsty Fleming demanded another battle-field, and when I suggested the milder interest of an old church, a ruinous castle, or the source of a river,

our chauffeur said such things are "no damned use at all," plagiarizing Sir Percy Scott's midshipman so obviously that I had to utter a warning. However and however, we tossed for it—heads, the Roman Wall, tails, a battlefield, and "heads" won.

WOOLER, IN THE CHEVIOTS

CHAPTER III

HADRIAN'S WALL

You can never bring in a wall.
A Midsummer Night's Dream.

A wall sufficient to defend
Our inland from the pilfering borderers.
Henry V.

THERE has never been an archæological controversy so inspiriting to its debaters as the question "Who built the Roman Wall?" Over it generations of antiquarians have furiously raged together, and quoted at each other the conclusions of authorities dating back to the Venerable Bede, the first expert to give anything like a description of the Wall and Vallum which follows the course of the Wall throughout the whole length of the unswerving line. In the early days of the nineteenth century whole families in the North country debated whether the original Vallum was patched or whether an entirely new one was constructed; whether Hadrian built the Wall sometimes attributed to Severus, or whether the two were partners. In an interesting old scrap album dated 1830 I recently came upon

a worn slip taken from a newspaper of the period. The wording ran: "Return, I implore you! Your father will admit Hadrian built the Wall."

Cetera desunt! But what a glimpse into a household!

The average pilgrim to the classic ground in Northumberland knows very little about the Roman remains, and probably has never read such monumental works as Bruce's *History of the Roman Wall*, and MacLauchan's *Survey of the Roman Wall*. Works of that class lie outside the range of the tepidly interested visitor. For him I have sorted out the various authoritative theories and simplified abstruse problems. Plainly they come to this: there is documentary evidence in a dozen histories of the building of the Wall, the Fosse, and Vallum, but accounts are not incontrovertible as to the actual raiser of the stone Wall, or Murus, which, stretching from sea to sea, is the most imposing of the Roman remains in Britain. To Hadrian and Severus, divided by a century of time, has been allotted the construction. Up to 1800 the claims of Severus predominated, but at the present time authorities are satisfied that if Severus did anything to the barrier it consisted in nothing more than repairing and improving what is now regarded as the work of Hadrian.

The most unimaginative creature must be thrilled by the sight of the thin grey streak spidering undeviatingly over the highest ridges, dipping into

vast hollows, rising again in an irregular line, and so onwards, league after league, to the western coast. I do not give much for the poetical faculties of anyone who can look without emotion on the broken surface of the imperial rampart laid under such dramatic conditions centuries upon centuries past. Hands that have long been dust chiselled each stone. Voices silenced æons ago once wakened the valleys, cried out the signals and sounded the alarms. Copses and glens where to-day is no murmur save low calls of sheep and the whisper of the wind through the braided grasses shook under the feet of the conquerors of the ancient world, marching to the skirl of primitive pipes.

In places, and for many miles, the once massive barrier shrinks to the nothingness to which centuries of depredators have consigned it. For generations the Wall, with its dressed limestones hewn in the neighbourhood, or, in some sectors, conveyed from distances, was regarded in the light of a handy quarry wherein material ready dressed was available for the carting. All over the traversed area age-old stones may be recognized, built into houses, outhouses, and modern walls, stones bearing the unmistakable herring-bone scoring of the Roman mason. Could these blocks speak what tales they would tell! Here and there among these built-in relics may be observed inscribed tablets, upside down sometimes, endways on often, and many of them have some facet that

relates to the life of the garrisons along the Wall. Quantities of the rough-hewn stones that formed the inner and outer layers found their way into lime-kilns. One way and the other latter-day barbarians utilized much of the material quarried for the express purpose of holding back the barbarians of long ago.

The present appearance of the Wall in Northumberland? The least damaged section lies near Cuddy's Crag (Cuthbert's Crag) at Borcovicus, from which station we have gleaned a large part of our knowledge of garrison life in the days of ancient Rome. Hereabouts portions convey, even in ruin, some idea of the stupendous character of the barrier, and as you climb along the broad top over a broken line which sometimes measures six feet and more across, you see between the stones the massed whinstone rubble bound together by the famous mortar which rendered Roman structures practically everlasting. Trying to encompass the colossal undertaking one's thoughts go back to the beginning. Someone first surveyed the course, guards uncountable must have protected him as he marked out the route of the Wall which was to bestride the country of the barbarians like a Colossus; someone guarded the guards themselves. Then came the laying of the first block, and builders, hundreds of builders, slaves and captives, who carried out the behests of their taskmasters. And Roman masons,

working with a will and a song, for on the Wall depended the safety of many legions.

The eastern end of the rampart is gone, nothing but the knowledge that the camp Segedunum (Wallsend) existed, remains to us. Of the massive masonry no vestige stands—on ground hallowed by the Roman army of occupation have risen up gigantic coal staithes, down which the laden wagons rattle and clank. To-day we associate Wallsend with coal and coal only. Time was when romance and Wallsend were well acquainted.

Right away to the western extremity it is easy to trace the direction taken by the Wall by means of the village names. Very appositely, since much of the material of which their churches and cottages are built came from the camps and Wall, the historic rampart is commemorated in the place-names. Thus: Wallsend, Benwell, Walbottle, Heddon-on-the-Wall, Wall-Houses, Wallshields, Walltown, Thirwall, Birdoswald, Wallbowers, Walton, Oldwall, Walby, Wallend, Wallfoot, Wallhead, and so on and on.

A Fosse, or ditch, forty feet broad in some places and ten to fifteen feet deep, runs along the north side of the Wall, maintaining its course through rock and earth from one end of the seventy to eighty miles' length of the stone barrier alongside. The Fosse, of course, increased the impenetrability of the fortification, as from the bottom of the ditch to the top of the Wall must have measured over thirty feet. On

the inner side of the Wall ran a military road by which communication was maintained along the line. It was made of rubble stones and laid as only the Romans laid roads, well and straight and truly, and in desolate tracks in the wilderness, through which the remnants of the barrier trail over the landscape, you may distinguish the line of communication over which passed the drafts that kept the garrisons along the Wall up to strength.

The stone Wall, backed on the north by the Fosse and the Military Way on the south, was supplemented on the south side of the Wall by a Vallum or earth-wall, which, if it illustrates its name, means "a palisaded rampart." The Vallum, it is supposed, was a precautionary measure against rebellious outbreaks among the conquered tribes of the south. At four or five mile intervals were twenty-three stations, varying in size, seventeen of them being actually on the Wall, used only by the garrison. Along the whole length were what we call "mile-castles," a term we get from the fact that these stout fortifications occurred at every *mille* or one thousand paces, the Roman mile. In between the mile-castles were watch-towers, protecting the sentries patrolling the Wall. Authorities allot four towers to each section, or a total of some three hundred and twenty turrets for the whole length. Under this wonderful system, orders could be passed alone the line with rapidity. The camps, of course, were military cities, but in

them have been discovered traces of that high civilization which ever marked Roman occupation—baths and villas, temples and sculptures. The whole boundary has proved rich with treasure. Relics innumerable, of high value and rare interest, have been unearthed.

It has been estimated by those who have spent lifetimes in studying the subject that 10,000 men were employed in the construction of the Wall and camps, and that the work was completed in two years.

There has come down to us an inventory relating to the Roman administration throughout the world, a link known as the *Notitia Imperii.* Dating from the fourth or fifth century, *item per lineam valli* ("also along the wall"), sheds light on the distribution of the garrisons at the date when the *Notitia* was compiled. Every cohort of infantry and alæ of cavalry, which were drawn from various countries held by the Romans, is mentioned by name, and assigned to the various camps.

In the limited space at my command it is not possible to delve deeply into this most interesting subject. It has been thoroughly written of—I almost said "out"—and by very able pens. To make things clear to the everyday reader, it would be well to give the names of the camps of Northumberland, taking them from their beginnings in the east:

Camp.	*Modern Name.*
Segedunum.	Wallsend.
Pons Ælli.	Newcastle.
Condercum.	Benwell Hill.
Vindobala.	Rutchester.
Hunnum.	Halton Chesters.
Cilurnam.	Chesters.
Procolita.	Carrowburgh.
Borcovicus.	Houseteads.
Vindolana.	Chesterholme.
Æsica.	Great Chesters.
Magna.	Caervoran.

Amboglanna, or Birdoswald, the twelfth and largest station on the Wall, is in Cumberland, and thus outside the scope of our survey.

The stationary camps were all built much in the same fashion, although differing in size. A southern aspect was usual, and a stream of water a necessity. As became military posts, an absence of luxury characterized the buildings, and in the remains of the suburbs found in almost all the camps no tessellated pavements and other structural refinements have been exposed.

Segedunum, then, is wiped out by modernism, as striking in its way as the once glorious Roman fortifications. We know from the *Notitia* that Segedunum was garrisoned by the Ligones, from Eastern Gaul, and though, of course, the roster gives the distribution of the troops on the Wall at the date when it was compiled, it is not considered by those

best able to judge that there was any material change in the garrisons throughout its history.

The busy streets of Newcastle have obliterated all signs of the station of Pons Ælii, and the cathedral church of St. Nicholas lies directly across the Wall.

Once out of the city of Newcastle going is easy over the famous military road which runs on the foundations of the old Roman highway, and is embedded upon stones filched from the Great Wall and Vallum running beside. In the eighteenth century what small amount of traffic there was between Newcastle and Carlisle was undertaken by packhorses, a primitive line of communication that served up to 1745, when the Royalists lay at Newcastle awaiting the Jacobite onslaught which never came. Instead of playing into the hands of the King, the Pretender's supporters besieged Carlisle, and as no direct road existed between the two places which was good enough for the passage of heavy artillery and baggage, the Royalists under General Wade found their movements much retarded. Wade then set about constructing the military road over which we are at the moment journeying.

The rhyme, as well known in the Highlands of Scotland as it is in Northumberland, expressed the general indebtedness to the roadmaker:

> If you had seen these roads before they were made,
> You would lift up your hands and bless General Wade.

It must not be forgotten that the warrior had, in Northumberland, the bed of the old Roman road to build upon, and they were famous road-layers, those men of ancient Rome.

Pons Ælii—to return for a moment to Newcastle—was garrisoned by the First Cohort of Cornavii, a British tribe. British auxiliaries served in Egypt, Illyria, Spain, and Gaul, and in the city of Rome, but it is an extraordinary circumstance that a British cohort should be made responsible for a section of the Wall across Britain. It is thought that this particular tribe, which belonged to the little peninsula jutting out between the Rivers Dee and Mersey, was held in regard, and that, as the Roman State became exhausted, the Cornavii tribe took the place of auxiliaries from farther afield.

Condercum (Benwell) gives the amateur chronicler nothing whatever to describe. Time was—but to-day we can recall only finds made here by excavators. An interesting temple was exposed, and two altars were found standing as originally placed. On the temple, erected by a centurion of the Twentieth Legion, was the crest of the famous Victorious corps, the running boar, met with on so many stones unearthed in Northumberland. Condercum was occupied by an ala of Asturians from Spain. What, I wonder, did these soldiers of the sunny south think of the climate, and a Benwell winter!

Vindobala (Rutchester), the fourth station, and now practically non-existent, was garrisoned by the Frisii, from the Frisian Islands near the German coast. Four altars were found here, and by means of one of them a sidelight was obtained on the religious beliefs—and they were many and varied—of the troops of occupation. The altar was dedicated to Mithras, the Persian Apollo, who, like his Grecian prototype, developed into a sun god, whose sign manual was the orb of day.

Hunnum (Halton Chesters) near Stagshaw bank, the fifth station along the Wall, was the quarters of the Sabinian cavalry honoured by the name of Sabina, wife of Hadrian, and as the Imperial Court was established in Britain during the winter A.D. 119-20, it is likely that the Empress herself visited at the lonely outpost the troop that bore her title.

As an amateur, very amateur, student of things antiquarian, I must say that the sector of the Wall containing what seems to me non-existent, or barely existent stations, up to and including Hunnum, possesses small interest for the unenlightened pilgrim. The remains can but be of purely expert and specialist concern.

Hereabouts the ancient Watling Street crosses the Wall, coming up from Dover via London, Dunstable, Chester (anciently Deva), and York (Eboricum of the Romans) to Hunnum and other stations upon the Wall, and so onwards to the northern turf

rampart constructed by the Romans from the Firth of Forth to the Clyde.

At Chollerford we come into the zone of the best portions of the Northumbrian line of the Wall. The meaning of the place-name will spring to your mind as readily as it did to my own. Northumbrian names are nothing if not explanatory—some are embarrassingly realistic.

Chollerford is a charming spot, and it rests upon the banks of the North Tyne with the lightness of thistledown, about five miles above the confluence of the two Tynes. Looking at the dark water rushing in spate through the seven-arched bridge, the scene was as picturesque as it was tradition fraught. Little islets broke up the turgid stream that in a dry summer reveals fragmentary remains of the bridge built by Severus which opened out at the front-door of the Prefect of the second ala of the Asturians billeted at Cilurnam.

The excavations at Cilurnam (Chesters), the tabulation and description of the remains found, was the life interest and work of the late Mr. John Clayton, of Chesters. And as it was in her husband's time, Mrs. Clayton readily permits anybody to view the camp. Here is a complete Roman station as originally planned, with a forum, market, shops, colonnades, bases of pillars, baths equipped with pipes and cisterns, and traces of suburban dwellings outside the station walls.

At the lodge gates of Chesters is the fine museum built by Mr. N. G. Clayton to house the collection of antiquities found in Northumberland. Many of the relics were brought to light by Mr. John Clayton himself, and by his right-hand man, Mr. Tailford, who helped his chief in the long work. There is something unexplainably alluring in treasure-hunting such as this. To dig up ornaments of gold and silver and jet and bronze from ruinous masonry; to thrust spades deep enough to expose a bearded Vulcan-being who stood to the soldiers of Rome as the spirit of the River Tyne; to find in a sunk guard-room a bronze tablet of citizenship, one of the three specimens found in Britain, out-Cristo's Monte, and is relic-finding on the scale of the Valley of the Kings.

The right of Roman citizenship was obtainable only by birth or gift for services rendered to the State. As the Empire widened and spread, it became possible to purchase what was then the highest honour in the world. The precise value set upon all that *Civis Romanus sum* stood for and implied is best illustrated in the beautiful scene wherein Paul protests, in Acts xxii., against the tyrannies of his captors:

"The chief captain commanded him to be brought into the castle, and bade that he should be examined by scourging, that he might know wherefore they cried so against him. And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, 'Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a

Roman, and uncondemned?' When the centurion heard that, he went and told the chief captain, saying, 'Take heed what thou doest; for this man is a Roman.' Then the chief captain came, and said unto him, 'Tell me, art thou a Roman?' He said, 'Yea.' And the chief captain answered, 'With a great sum obtained I this freedom.' And Paul said, '*But I was free born!*'"

The rare treasure, as I have said, one of only three tablets of Roman citizenship unearthed in this country, is now in the British Museum.

CHAPTER IV

ALSO ALONG THE WALL

Some plaster, or some loam, or some rough-cast about him, to signify wall.

A Midsummer Night's Dream.

I AM wandering afar from the museum at Chesters, the contents of which deal with all phases of Roman existence and philosophy, with the decay of omnipotence, splendours of history, the solving of geographical and military riddles, and with all manner of odd facts and fancies that show the observer the intricate minutiæ of the ways and means adopted by the Romans to solve the enigma of how best to subdue the barbaric North.

I seem to see those ardent antiquarians, Collingwood Bruce, John Clayton, and the rest, building brick upon brick from the strong scaffolding of a train of thought which was able to select evidence from stones and compare archæological facts with recorded history in a precise, yet withal imaginative, manner. I seem to see them throwing themselves on

the ground like Indians on the warpath, pressing their ears upon the stony earth to hear the footsteps of men long dead. As treasure-seekers they would tap the firm surface with their hammers, and listen for the hollow echoes in cavities where wonderful things might lie hidden. They dug, they went into the quarried earth, they let the sunlight into deserted altars and forums and workshops in decay.

I am not expert enough to tell you in authoritative fashion of the inscribed stones in the museum at Chesters, or to say much of the fine collection of milestones, and statues of Cybele and the armless Victory. Altars to many gods and goddesses there are, and centurial stones from all along the wall, also numerous memorial tablets raised to the memory of good husbands by appreciative wives, and *vice versa*. The little altar marked—and the lettering is clear cut—Dibvs Veteribvs most appealed to me. Translated the words read: "To the Old Gods!" How had the new ones served this soldier of Rome that he should thus hark back? "To the Old Gods!" Has any message so terse and so full of meaning come out of these cold stones?

One of the many altars at Chesters is dedicated to Coventina, who was the tutelary goddess of Procolita (Carrowburgh), the seventh station on the line of the wall. To reach Procolita, you come out of the gate at Chesters, and follow the road uphill to Walwick, and as you go you will be thinking that

CHOLLERFORD BRIDGE, NORTH TYNE

Tower Tye on the hill looks old enough to date back a long way. Well it may. It was constructed some two hundred years ago from stones filched from the Wall. A short way farther along the road is Limestone Bank, where you may see great ditches cut through the basaltic ridge, and huge boulders, weighing tons, which by some means or another were hoisted from their bed. But how, and why were they not utilized? In one gigantic stone you still may trace the wedge holes.

Of Procolita little remains to-day. The Well, over which presided the goddess whose stone effigy is now immured in the Chesters museum, was lost for years, though known to be somewhere in the vicinity. At last some lead miners prospecting for ore struck the well-head, whereupon Mr. Clayton took the excavation in hand. He found the votive offerings to Coventina, thousands upon thousands of gold and silver and bronze coins, pearls, ornaments, shoes, and myriads of miscellaneous treasures. And talking of shoes, there is preserved at Chesters the exact counterpart of the shoes beloved of the flapper of to-day, the hardly-any-toe-capped, much bestrapped type of footgear.

Fragmentary remains of a mile-castle stand just where the Wall bends northward. We have passed without knowing it sites where others of these castella have been, but the stones of them have disappeared into all manner of erections, and only the expert

knows where to look for foundations that can barely be traced, and sometimes cannot be found. The Wall now spiders over a lofty whinstone ridge, taking in its stride Sewingshields, the renowned in ballad and tradition. As all lovers of Sir Walter Scott will remember, Sewingshields Castle, of which there is no trace remaining, was the stage whereon was played out the knight's adventures in *Harold the Dauntless.*

From Sewingshields the Wall climbs over the crags until it dips into wide Busy Gap, the pass into Hexhamshire through which the moss-troopers rode many a raid. The wide rolling country below stretches like a sea into grey-blue horizons famous as the environment of the most merciless freebooters.

The trio of meres, known as the Northumberland Lakes, a mile or more apart, outlined their shores. Craig Lough looked about twenty acres in extent. It lies beneath a wooded and picturesque crag close under the lee of the Wall, and doubtless the expanse served as a reservoir for the garrison. Greenlee Lough is a larger sheet of water, and is fringed by a ragged belt of young firs which shed a strange, elusive sense of wildness on the spot. On the sombre surface dark shadows brood upon the sunniest day. Broomlee, wilder still, is adjacent to Borcovicus, and from the altitude of the camp all the lakes appear sizeable tarns. All manner of wildfowl frequent the shores, and here

my friend Mr. Abel Chapman, of Houxty, pursues his favourite study of whence came such and such a bird, whither goes it, and why.

Standing on wind-swept Cuddy's Crag one looks over a vista rarely beautiful in a bleak sort of way. The thorn hedges long since gave place to strong stone walls, and the pastures and fields to "white lands," dotted with sheep and sturdy "blue-greys." Westward lay Crag Lough a-glitter, and southward, beyond Barcombe Hill, from which the Romans obtained much material, and Vindolana, was etched the strong outline of Langley Castle, once a Derwentwater possession, owned now by the widow of Mr. J. Cadwallader Bates, the historian of Northumberland. Away and away, over the valley of the South Tyne, Crossfell and Skiddaw engraved familiar outlines against the sky. To the north-east the hills of Simonside, and grim Rimside Moor, lay jagged and austere. Westward the Cheviots, like rounded ant-hills, one shadowy summit after another, trailed across the horizon. Below the rampart crag, looking north as the Romans were ever wont to do, it seemed that the sea should be there. Sheer down goes the face of the escarpment, and up to it grows an ocean of grass and hummocks of heather, wave upon wave. Far as the eye can see, "white lands," which is grazing ground of no fertility.

Borcovicus, or Houseteads? I was not forgetting—I was shirking telling of it. You know how it is

with a North-country person when his emotion is aroused? He seeks to hide his feelings, to bury the cause, and crush the effect. To me this Roman city set high on the green hill is holy ground. It is not because this camp above all others has contributed to our knowledge of Roman life as it was spent upon the great barrier, not because the grass-grown enclosure criss-crossed by lines of streets, fragments of columns, and broken arches, denotes the once high importance of the desolate spot, but because some aspect of the remains makes so direct a dramatic appeal, ten times more so than grand and imposing relics. You cross the grass to the line of the Wall, to the northern gate of Borcovicus, laid bare during recent years by Mr. Clayton, of Chesters, which even in its arrested decay is massive and strong with its two passages that made enemy entrance difficult, and exit well-nigh impossible, and, quite suddenly, you see the worn stone sill. The passing of many feet! It is curiously affecting. The same at the four gateways, which have typical guard-towers on either side, and divisions in the middle which form two narrow entrances, so narrow that the guard's reminder of the small gauge of the Roman vehicles was not needed. In the stone sills are grooves cut deep into the stone by Roman wheels, countless wheels, years of wheel traffic. The worn stones annihilate the centuries, and give you, not dry-as-dust historical facts, but Roman soldiers in their togas as they lived,

men who tell immortal tales athrill with the drama of a romantic past.

My American looked long at them. I cannot tell what old buried thoughts were surging in his own at the moment. Of his own accord he lifted his Stetson (American for hat!), saluting, with what of reverence is in him, high aims, self-sacrifice, achievement.

I turned aside up the hill which rose sharply towards a high, wild crag, and at the top I sat and looked back at the ancient ruins desolate and forlorn. This region once teemed with life, and to-day few areas in this country are so sparsely populated. They were happy, those Tungrian infantrymen who garrisoned Borcovicus, as German settlers are happy almost anywhere, and if they sighed for the summer when the searching winds found them out, they did not tell us so in any of the messages that have come down to us in all their significance and stately simplicity.

A mile south of Borcovicus lies the detached camp of Vindolana, or Chesterholm, and here on the Roman way, known to-day as the Stanegate, which runs from Cilurnam to the north-gate of Vindolana, may be seen a Roman milestone, standing as Roman hands set it in place. There are many milestones to be seen at Chesters, as I have indicated, and in other treasure-houses, but a Roman milestone is an object that gains in grandeur according to its position. On

the roadside its commanding appearance—it is six feet tall—and circular shape, with the no-longer decipherable lettering, puts our homely modern "measurements in stone" into the category of jerry-built things.

Vindolana—what a lovely Christian name it would make!—was held by the Fourth Cohort of Gauls, as was recorded on one of the many altars and inscribed stones found here and removed to Chesters. In spite of the careful excavations which were carried on for years and completed by Mr. Anthony Hedley, the owner of Vindolana, the site of the detached and important post is now overgrown with grass, and only a green rise here and there indicates the what-has-been that lies about us.

Mr. Hedley was an antiquarian of sorts—I think one may say so much without offence, for to-day it would seem a species of vandalism for an antiquarian to excavate ancient stones only to build them in again, and that into a cottage-villa. It was Mr. Hedley's pride that his new house, full of romance it seemed to him, was an old house, older than any others about him. The stones used were hewn by Romans, and carry on their frontage the characteristic herring-bone scoring. Numbers are inscribed, and in a covered way leading down to the burn is a replica of the familiar trotting boar of the Twentieth Legion, with the motto *Valeria Victrix*, of which there are so many examples on tablets and frontal-pieces at Chesters.

Back to the Wall, and over Steel Rig and Cat's Stairs to Winshields, the roof of this Roman world, 1,230 feet above sea-level. Into a valley—the course is like a switchback railway—and across, and up again to the significantly named Bloody Gap and Thorny Doors. In this sector is a fine example of a mile-castle as little ruinous as any to be found along the Wall, which hereabouts is starred by finds of deep pathos and interest upon which it would delight me much to dwell had I the option. So onwards to Æsica (Great Chesters), the tenth camp, of which little is to be seen but the barest pencillings of masonry. The *Notitia* gives the First Cohort of the Asturians as Æsica's garrison, and confirmation of this was obtained from an impression COH. I. ASTN, found upon a roof-tile unearthed in the excavations conducted in 1894.

There is a really grand portion of the Wall beyond Æsica—the local inhabitants had not the building mania in so pronounced a form as elsewhere. The grey line climbs up to and over the "Nine Nicks of Thirlwall," as the giant notches on the sky-line are named, and descends from the frowning heights to a smiling valley. The wild moors and the crags and the ridge of whinstone that has formed the foundation of the Wall from Sewingshields dwindle. The Wall, too, owing to modern quarrying operations, becomes again a mere outline, and of Magna (Cærvoran), the eleventh station, very little can be traced. Magna was a detached post, like Vindolana, and was built

south of the Wall and Vallum. The *Notitia* allots the Second Cohort of Dalmatians here, and an inscription found at Thirlwall confirms this. The small River Tipalt crosses the Wall as it journeys south to join up with the North Tyne, and on a rocky pinnacle, with the Tipalt running below, stands all that is left of Thirlwall Castle after it has served the purposes of a hundred builders. Gloomy in aspect, and ruinous beyond most ruins, the stronghold was once renowned. Edward the First stayed here a night in 1306, as he journeyed from Haltwhistle to Lanercost. The name Thirlwall is said to be derived from the Scots having "thirled" or pierced the wall in this region to facilitate their depredatory passings and repassings.

Parts of the Roman road with the Saxon name of Maiden Way, can still be traced as it comes rolling up from the south and crosses the Wall, continuing into Scotland. The Stanegate filters from the east to Magna, which was undoubtedly an extremely important station owing to the fact that this region was open and the position exposed. Strong defences were therefore necessary in a section so entirely lacking in artificial buttresses. Our old acquaintance Wade's Road trails its fine surface close to the rampart of old Rome, and passes out of our sight gleaming after a light fall of rain like newly-cleaned pewter.

The glen of Poltross, with its little burn rollicking through, marks the frontier of Northumberland.

CILURNAM, CHESTERS

What happens to the Wall thereafter is no concern of ours, and we must leave it. But before we turn . . . kneel down with me on this worn stone, and raise your right arm . . . so, in the picturesque salutation of ancient Rome.

Vale!

CHAPTER V

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE

Even there where merchants most do congregate.
Merchant of Venice.

Lay down our proportions to defend
Against the Scot, who will make road upon us.
Henry V.

It is contrary to all colour-book precedent to take readers anywhere near a city, the invariable custom being to disguise the fact that there is a town of any size in the neighbourhood. A southerner's idea of a holiday in Northumberland "features" massed collieries, ironworks, shipyards, and coal wharves—precisely the view-point one expects from that half of England which does not know how the other half lives. We go abroad, visit colonies and continents, and neglect the lovely portions of our homeland. Northumberland has been considerate. More than any other county it has compartmented its commercialism, and kept the working area in one corner.

Comparisons—and all properly brought up people were taught this in childhood—are odious. As regards

Northumberland, a parallel need not be attempted. Speaking as an expert in countries and counties, I declare that Northumberland is not comparable with any other—it stands head and shoulders above all—and it is astonishing that so few people make it their pleasure and business to explore what is indeed the wonderland of England. There are regions I can liken only to the mountains of Daghestan; there are heather-clad moors, pathless as the steppes, with burns and streams that alternate between torrents and Sloughs of Despond; highlands which were the heart of Border history; a fine sea-coast, with dunes reminiscent of the rolling tundras of the Arctic, and cliffs—

> Whose rocky shore beats back the envious siege
> Of watery Neptune;

vales and dales; rivers and woods; fortresses and castles; and relics of the glory that was Rome in numbers sufficient to keep busy the most insatiable student that ever was.

The best time of year to choose? Well, I went over every inch of its mileage last autumn, and with the memory of the gold and brown and copper reds of the unending woods that saw history in the making, and the fairy tracks of brilliant leaves on either side of every road, I say, "Go in autumn." But they tell me spring is yet more beautiful. It may be so; I cannot credit it. Northumberland, the nobly named, is a somewhat difficult county to

see unless you happen to be a keen walker, or are fortunate enough to be a motorist or a good cyclist. Distances are so great and the train system is inadequate; in fact, in places it gives out altogether. But never mind difficulties. See Northumberland somehow. It is, of course, the finest sporting centre in this country; I don't mean for hunting the fox, though there are celebrated packs for the following, but real sport, that calls into play the attributes which divide the naturalist-sportsman-observer from the slayer of so many thousand pheasants.

"Coals to Newcastle." Another southern idea. Whoever heard a Northumbrian speak of "coals"? You order "coals" in London, and you see the word "coals" inscribed upon the window of your coal agent's office; but those who are accustomed to treating coal as a domestic necessity, and not as black diamonds to be numbered, never add the superfluous "s."

It is held by those able to judge that the Romans made use of, and worked, the coal of Northumberland. Bits of coal and cinders were found in the Roman stations of the Wall, and Wallis, writing in 1767, tells us of "the coal cinders, some very large," which were dug out of the foundations of Cærvorran. These "glowed in the fire like other cinders," and were not to be distinguished from them when taken out.

During the Saxon and Danish occupation of this

country, and for close on a hundred years after the Conquest, coal was not mentioned. In 1239 we find Henry the Third granting a Charter to Newcastle "to dig coals and stones on the common soil of that town without the walls thereof in a place called the Castle-field." Coals again—the southerner's word!

1306 saw coal promoted to the King's palace in London, and in that year the use of it in London became so great amongst artificers of all kinds that it was prohibited as a public nuisance. The quaint prohibition removed, the export from the Tyne increased enormously, and presently began an ever-growing trade with foreign countries. You could buy coal in London in the sixteenth century at four shillings a chaldron, and in Newcastle for "twelve pence." Henry the Fifth appointed Customs Commissioners to measure the capacity of the "keels" which conveyed the coal from the wharves of the period to the ships. A keel held twenty chaldron, and every chaldron paid twopence to His Majesty.

The word "keel" on Tyneside had not the restricted meaning apportioned to it elsewhere; it was the name for an entire boat. It is the very earliest English word ever recorded,* as it is the word for which all Tynesiders have most regard. East Anglia

* "Then a litter of cubs" (meaning the English) "issuing forth from the lair of the lioness of Barbaria, in three *cyuls*, as it is expressed in their tongue, in ours" (the Latin) "long ships."—Gildas, A.D. 564, *History of the Britons.*

is the only other place which at one time used the term "keel" as meaning the whole vessel, and in an oldish glossary of East Anglian words we find: "Keel: a kind of boat employed on the Yare; now very rare."

The Tyneside keels, then, descendants of the Saxon "cyuls," were coal barges, and the keel-men of Newcastle formed as distinctive a faction as farmers, colliers, or fishermen. In 1699 their numbers ran into thousands.

There came a time in olden days at which all trades inevitably took to song and ballad to prove their worth, just as the crude materialism of the present, in spite of persistent urgings of "Say it to music," adopts other methods. As the keels flourished and multiplied there arose "The Keel Row," one of the finest marching songs of the world. Its quality is the reason why Scottish collectors have occasionally filched the most representative of all Northumbrian airs and labelled it "Fine old Scottish." It was, and is, the Tyneside anthem, and we cannot allow any poaching. Rudyard Kipling, in *Plain Tales from the Hills*, says: "The man who has never heard the Keel Row rising, high and shrill, above the rattle of the regiment going past the saluting base, has something yet to hear and understand."

Business-like Queen Elizabeth obtained a lease of the coal-mines of Gateshead and the Durham fields, and other rich centres, and this concession she turned

into the first known example of a "corner." Company promoting and cornering of markets in Elizabeth's day would have been labelled philanthropy. The Queen's philanthropical intentions led her to assign her shares in the coal deal to Leicester, who handed them on to his secretary, Sutton (the founder of the Charterhouse), who assigned them to others for the use of the mayor and burgesses of Newcastle. This feat of legerdemain was not accomplished quite as easily as I am writing it, but difficulties only brought out new resources in Elizabeth, who did quite nicely, thank you, out of the scheme. Coal in London, as a consequence, leapt up to nine shillings a chaldron, with a duty of twelvepence a chaldron to Her Majesty.

The coal trade was now of the highest importance, and hundreds of ships engaged in it. As many historians have emphasized, the cruel taxes imposed on the export of coal, and the shameless monopolies permitted, contributed in no small measure to the downfall of Charles the First. In 1677 we find Charles the Second granting to his natural son Charles Lennox, Duke of Richmond, and his heirs, a duty of one shilling a chaldron on all coal brought to London. Londoners are vaguely aware that, in addition to paying an unusually high price per ton for coal, they are mulcted of a mysterious extra shilling, from which tax the provincial purchaser of coal is exempt. The shilling is the aftermath of a

Charlesism that continued to 1800, when the Government purchased the impost from the Richmond of the time for the annual payment of £19,000, an investment yielding at the present an income far in excess of that amount.

A duty laid upon coal helped to build St. Paul's, and after the Great Fire a special tax of three shillings per chaldron was levied to help rebuild the ruined churches of London.

Newcastle deserves a chapter all to itself, and—flying in the face of precedent—it is going to have one, for no capital of any county better understood the meaning and responsibilities contained in the word. The city is unlovely now—is any big city lovely that is smothered in the incense of business and that strange flavour which, for want of a better name, we call "provincialism"? New Newcastle has parks and open-air spaces of a size and quality which prove that the present-day rulers have at heart the welfare of those who are to follow after us, no less surely than in the days of long ago when the walled town, military base in most of the Border Wars, gave protection and life to generations of "Newcassel" folk.

The sight—it strikes one suddenly, as all indelible impressions come—of the Keep of the old castle, so long since the New Castle on the Tyne, is curiously pathetic. I confess to being considerably affected when I look at this dungeon of history, as it stands

there with its time-worn countenance, and a certain forlorn dignity and aloofness, as of something valued once and now forgotten. It makes a fine spectacle by the North-Eastern Railway, almost on the lines, in the midst of a riot of modernism. I have seen medieval castles cheek by jowl with astonishing neighbours, and I doubt if anywhere you can match the proud uprising of this stubborn relic amid a business centre which curls about it in all the architectural and other blatancies of to-day. Hundreds of years have gone by without bringing to the ground this fortress of age-old greatness. Battered, bleak, the stones darkened by the fumes of a hundred furnaces, the tower stands on its plateau, stern and square, as if cut from the native rock. In its most evil days (1783) the Norman-Plantagenet stronghold was offered as "a Wind Mill for the purpose of grinding corn and Bolting Flour, or making Oil, etc. There is an exceedingly good Spring of Water within the Castle, which renders it a very valuable situation for a Brewery, or any Manufactory that requires a constant supply of water. The proprietor will be at a considerable part of the expence."

How are the mighty fallen!

Later, again, the North-Eastern Railway Company all but secured the Keep as a signal-box! Well, the North-Eastern Railway is a railway with a history, but I am glad they were not able to supplement it by converting the grand old place into an archive for

signals. To-day the possession of this castle of varying fortunes is vested in those who reverence our monuments.

From the days of the Romans, to the Norman Conquest, there is no mention of the town we know as Newcastle under any other name than Monkchester, and under that, so Hodgson tells us, only once. "A place called Munkeceastre, that is, the City of the Monks." When Newcastle was a Roman station it was named by the Emperor Hadrian Pons Ælii, or the Ælian Bridge. It was Hadrian's invariable custom to identify the Ælian family to which he belonged with his works and interests, and thus it was that at the commencement of his great Wall and Vallum which stretched away to the Solway Firth, he stationed the First Cohort of Ælian Marines, and when he reared at this point the first bridge across the Tyne that was worth calling a bridge, he bestowed on it the name of his clan. Two coins are known to have been struck in Hadrian's reign to commemorate the building of two bridges, one of seven, and the other of five, arches. Authorities are convinced that the seven-arched bridge was that of Newcastle, as the one with the five arches was the Pons Ælius at Rome. Hadrian's bridge served for many hundreds of years, and in 1250 was transmogrified into another with a tower in the centre, fortified gateways, battlements, and the usual features of a warlike period. The devastating flood of 1771, before which every

THE SOUTH TYNE

bridge across the Tyne, except that at Corbridge, went down, destroyed the little that remained of the ancient Pons Ælii. In its foundations coins of Hadrian, Trajan, Faustine, Lucius Verus, and Antoninus Pius were found.

Bridge number three was commenced in 1775, and gave way in its turn to that seventh wonder of the engineering world, the Swing Bridge, which turns its colossal proportions on a centre pivot, and thus makes a fairway for ships to pass up and down stream. The other span across the Tyne, Stephenson's High Level Bridge, opened for traffic in 1850, is one of the most famous bridges in the Empire, and forms a monument to the great Tynesider whose achievement it was.

The first written mention of the Tyne was made by St. Bede, and the meaning and derivation of the word has been as much debated as the name of the Roman Emperor who built the Wall and Vallum. Bullet in his *Mémoirs sur la lang Celt* defines the Tyne as "rivière formée de deux rivières—Ty, deus; Tyn, double," and added that it is wrong to call by the same name both the rivers that form it. Harrison, without mentioning his authority, says the Tyne in ancient days was called the Alain, and other writers conclude that Tyne means the British Tuinn, waves, or Tuinna, water's edge. Whatever its original meaning the word to-day stands for an important tradeway of the world, which is indeed almost unique, for what other

commercial stream can crowd itself with massed shipping, and flow through a blurred atmosphere dense with smoke and fumes from the huge industrial yards packed along its banks, and then a few short miles upstream turn itself into a clear river charged with the peaty scent of mountain burns? It is at Netherwarden that the two branches of the Tyne unite, after which the stream receives some large watercourses. The source of the North Tyne is to be found on the Scottish border, and for a holiday-maker with an exploratory type of mind I don't know any better way of spending a profitable few days. The South Tyne rises behind Cross Fell.

The Tyne salmon fisheries were mentioned in the reign of Henry the First, and so late as 1775 large catches were reported at Low Lights where the river meets the sea. The first blow to the fisheries was the building of the locks at Bywell, which barred the salmon from their shallow breeding grounds, and the second—a knock-out!—was the complete commercializing of the lower waters. Cinders thrown overboard from ocean-going tramps do not amalgamate with salmon.

When the great empire of Rome rocked upon its base, and the Romans were called home, it was down the Tyne and under the Pons Ælii they had built, that many of the legionaries passed in their galleys. Then came the Saxons from over the sea, again by way of the Tyne, in their ships of war, called by them

"cyuls," the forerunners of our Tyneside "keels." They did not come as invaders like the Romans centuries before; their numbers were too few and their arms were too crude to spell menace to the Britons. The fair stranger-folk were allowed to settle and make themselves homes. Word was sent back to Saxony, and in a few years ship-loads of Engles arrived with their women and red-haired, freckled children. More and more Engles came and tilled the soil as the Britons had never tilled it, and as the golden-haired girls found favour in the eyes of the swarthy Britons, so a new type of man-child appeared. It was a time of comparative peace in which Pons Ælii became a centre of holiness with "monasteries uncountable."

A new enemy appeared up the Tyne—the Norsemen or Danes, sea-nomads with no patience to build or plough. They came to lay waste and pillage a land where the good things of life could be obtained easily. Before the common foe Britons, Celts, Saxons, and Engles united to expel the invader. Victory is a matter of staying power, and the Engles and Saxons knew that as well as we do to-day. The struggle went on until the time of King Alfred, with whom our civilization may be said to have begun—that is to say, if you take the dictionary meaning of the word. Alfred's campaign against the ravishers of his country is surely the most imaginative in history, and his methods of rousing

his people to the pitch where the Danes would have had to kill them all or else give way is as romantic and fantastic as the tale of the cake-burning. Then the rounding up, the disarming, and the revival meetings in which the beaten Danes found grace! I recollect hearing a lecturer say that "the Reverend Dr. Torrey has the persuasive power of a King Alfred." But not even Dr. Torrey could capture a King Guthrum who had come over to take a personal hand in the looting, baptize him, stand godfather to him, and then make him a popular bishop.

The acceptance of Christianity by the Danish leaders was followed by a short peace that passed understanding. The armies that had fought each other worked together at road-making and home-building. A few Danish names are still recognizable in Northumberland: the Henry of the Percy family, and all names beginning with the aspirate, say Herbert, Hubert, Harold, Hancock, are Danish, and the basic cause of that beautiful muddling of the "h" that still perplexes us, and which in our ignorance we put down to the mysterious influence of a "Cockney dialect," the rule governing which is to put it on where it is not needed and leave it off where it is. The Danes of Tyneside called the Engles "Hengles," and the Engles called a Dane of the name of Henry, "'Enry."

After Alfred had pacified the Danes he set about

TYNEMOUTH PRIORY.

building a navy, and many keels were laid along the banks of the River Tyne. After him came Canute, a Dane, who declared he was a true-born Englishman and no longer a Dane. And then Norman William, claiming the throne of this country by right of succession and battling for it. The Conqueror reckoned himself an Englishman, and issued an edict forbidding anyone to call him "Norman" or "Norseman." He stood, he said, for a united England. And after him no ruler these nine hundred years has ever sat on the throne of the Engles by right of conquest.

William the Conqueror at once recognized the wonderful site occupied by the northern town, and upon the most commanding hill-top he built a typical Norman stronghold, which was enlarged by William Rufus and called the New Castle upon the Tyne.

> He buylded the Newcastell upon the Tyne,
> The Scotts for to gaynstande and to defende.

There remains nothing of it to-day but the main tower or Keep, the Black Gate, and a postern which is, I believe, the only standing Norman postern in England. "If four walls told," what strange and stirring tales the old Keep could relate "of those immortal dead who live again." In its shadow rode Edward Baliol, after Halidon Hill, on his way to do Scotland's homage to Edward the Third; that tragic figure Henry the Fourth, too, seeking sanctuary after

the Battle of Towton; Edward the Fourth; Richard the Third in peace and war; and Henry the Seventh after Bosworth. We should hear of famous sieges, and particularly of the siege in 1644, when Sir John Marley held the castle long after the enemy had taken the town of Newcastle. The motto of the city, granted by Charles the First, commemorates the gallant defence—*Fortiter defendit triumphans.*

Charles entered the castle as he went North to seek the help of the Scots against his Parliament, and passed it as he returned through a line of pikes, and guarded by Scottish horsemen, "those nearest the king bareheaded." It is likely that the old Keep was the last glimpse Charles took of Newcastle as he rode away to his death at Whitehall. James the Sixth of Scotland and First of England was received at the great entrance, and around it surged the multitude, whose rapturous welcome caused their new monarch to say, "By ma saul, they're eneuch to spoil a gude keng!" And amid "great acknowledgments of love" Cromwell and his Roundheads took possession.

In the unending Border fights the great fortress stands out vividly in the records of conflicts great and small. Hotspur defended Newcastle against James, second Earl Douglas, whilst the Earl of Northumberland lay at Alnwick waiting for a chance to attack the Scottish army as they returned home.

And he* marched up to Newcastel
And rode it round about;
"O wha's the lord o' this castel?
Or wha's the lady o't?"

But up spake proud lord Percy then,
And O he spake hie!
"I am the lord of this castel,
My wife's the lady gay."

Thus the old ballad. The Percy and the Douglas met in single combat outside the walls of Newcastle, or so tradition has it; and in the skirmish Hotspur was unhorsed and Earl Douglas captured the Percy pennon, a prize which Douglas boasted should be set on the highest tower of his fortress at Dalkeith. Hotspur was with difficulty restrained from having another joust, but contented himself with a vow that his banner should never leave Northumberland. In the polite fashion of the period, Douglas agreed to give Hotspur his chance:

Yet I will stay at Otterbourne,
Where you sall welcome be;
And if you come not at three dayis end,
A fause lord I'll call thee."

And so Hotspur revenged the taking of his pennon before Newcastle, though there is no more historical authority for the Shakespearean tradition that the Douglas died at Otterburn by the sword of Hotspur than there is for the Shakespearean killing of Hotspur by the sword of the Prince of Wales at Shrewsbury.

* "He" being the Douglas.

Affairs had to be so arranged in order that Henry of Wales might speak the noble requiem:

> That earth that bore him dead,
> Bore not alive so stout a gentleman.

In the reign of Edward the First, Newcastle was circuited by fortified walls, of which fragments still remain, battlemented, and towered and turreted after the custom of the time. They were two miles in circumference, and from twelve to twenty feet high. Leland said of the rampart: "The strength and magnificence of the waulling of this towne far passeth all the waulles of the cities of England, and most of the townes of Europe." To them, and sometimes through them, surged many a battle tide. For over three centuries they stood impregnable, and foe after foe, trying to destroy or conquer them, drew back discomfited.

From whatever side you enter Newcastle, the surpassingly fine steeple and lantern of "St. Nicholas's," as the native always terms the Cathedral Church, "lifteth up a head of majesty, as high above the rest, as the cypress tree above the low shrubs." So wrote William Grey in his *Survey of Newcastle-upon-Tyne*, 1649. The "long faire church," he chronicles, "has a stately high stone steeple, with many pinakles, a stately stone lantherne, standing upon four arches."

The building of the Cathedral itself has been

ascribed to several people. It was finished in 1350, but had then a battlemented tower such as can be seen at Durham. The lantern was an adornment of a hundred years later, and was, says Grey, "builded by Robert de Rhodes, Lord Prior of Tinemouth."

The most ignorant of us can see at a glance that the architecture of the top of the steeple built in the form of an imperial crown, with arches and knotted pinnacles as delicately formed as they are light and airily exquisite in effect, is altogether out of the ordinary, which accounted, I suppose, for the earnest architectural students from America — their horn spectacles bewrayed them!—who, when I was last in the Cathedral, were going over it with callipers, and putting cabalistic signs on paper, and calculating how best to set about building a lantern tower of the same design in Hoover City, Mass. Making friends with these strenuous young men, I found they had not missed a single English Cathedral, and they were going home convinced that Newcastle outshone them all! That same evening I heard an architectural expert lament in the jargon of our time that the dome of St. Paul's "left him cold." St. Nicholas's, I concluded, heated him up. He dilated for an hour upon the four points of view from which you may see the light through the centre of the crown take the outline of a well-proportioned wheatsheaf. For myself, ignorant as I am of the real qualities of fine buildings, I feel that the man who built this tower

of the somewhat obscure history deserved to have recorded upon it the epitaph on the tomb of Sir Christopher Wren in St. Paul's: "If you seek his monument, look around."

Ben Jonson wrote a poetical enigma around the lantern of St. Nicholas's, and story after story and tradition after tradition hangs over the hoary spire. There is a grip in the following slice of history which comes home to all who knew something of reprisals in the Great War. It was in 1644, during the furious besieging of Newcastle, that the Scots threatened to demolish the lantern-tower unless the keys of the Castle were surrendered. To this, gallant Sir John Marley replied by placing at the top of the steeple all the Scottish prisoners of war. Said he, "Our enemies shall either preserve it or be buried in its ruins."

Margaret Tudor, daughter of Henry the Seventh, attended "the church messe" as she journeyed north escorted by a great retinue, to marry James the Fourth of Scotland, and here for a while she stopped to rest and pray as she returned southward, after the slaying of her king at Flodden.

History is "in the quire and walks about." Within the ancient church the convention of marriage between James, Duke of Rothesay, and Ann, daughter of the Duke of Suffolk, was signed. John Knox was for two years preacher here in the reign of Edward the Sixth, and standing in the nave made his great

justification before the Council of the North when charged with teaching that the Mass was idolatrous.

James the Seventh of Scotland, on his way to his crowning as James the First of England, attended a service at St. Nicholas's, held by "Toby" Matthews, Bishop of Durham. And later years brought James's son to the Cathedral to hear less pleasing utterances. The oft-told story instances the fanaticism of the Scottish preacher, which led him to call upon the congregation to bait a prisoner by singing the fifty-second Psalm:

> Why dost thou, tyrant, boast thyself
> Thy wicked works to praise?

The King, so the charming tale relates, stood up, and in his slow and halting way begged the people to sing instead the psalm he should give them:

> Have mercy, Lord, on me, I pray,
> For men would me devour.

It is as it should be that the congregation spurned the preacher's lines and sang those of the King's choosing.

There is no authority for this pathetic tale, but there is a modicum of evidence in favour of it. Charles was ever slow and difficult of speech. The only occasion upon which he spoke easily was in his own defence at his trial.

Charles the First was sold to the Parliamentary forces from Anderson Place, the headquarters of the

Scots, and the King's prison-house. It was a noble mansion, built on the site of the Greyfriars Monastery immediately after the dissolution, by Robert Anderson, and it was at first known as the "Newe House," and described as "no less than stately and very magnificent, being supposed the most so of any house in the Kingdom, within a walled town." My grandfather remembered well its beauties, and would tell us of the Lort burn running down the valley to the Tyne, and of the peacocks strutting on the lawns of the Anderson palace, and the walks, and the yew hedges, and the gardens which were vast enough to provide Grey Street, Grainger Street, the markets and all their thoroughfares, with the land they occupy. The old house was taken down by Richard Grainger when Major George Anderson, of the 34th Regiment, died in 1831.

The oldest church in Newcastle is St. Andrew's, and a tradition, supported by the architecture, ascribes the building of it to King David of Scotland, the creator of Melrose, who died in 1153. I judged the ancient fane must be something rather wonderful, for there I found the young gentlemen with the horn glasses busily engaged in examining the trumpet-shaped nose that had once been the spout of a gargoyle, on which the monk-builders, or the weather, had expended much detail of expression.

St. Andrew's suffered in the siege of Newcastle in 1644, and the ugly buttresses were built up to

save the fabric. An echo of the effects of the battering whispers in the parish register of 1645: "There was no child bap[td] in this church for I years tim after the town was taken; nor sarmon in this church for I years tim." The registers of the church are transcendently interesting, and I wish I had space to record a few of the quaint entries relating to the "sogers," murderers, witches, thieves, and "menne of honoure," who received burial here.

There were at one time several chantries, and that dedicated to the Holy Trinity was founded by Adam de Athol, Lord of Jesmond, in Richard the Second's reign. Sir Adam is said to be the generous benefactor who presented the Town Moor to Newcastle, and he was buried within his chantry, which went down before the vandal-wreckers of the early nineteenth century.

St. John's Church, too, is an old relic, dating back to 1287, and the parish registers are even more interesting than those of St. Andrew's. The illumination contained in an entry under August, 1589, is considerable: "Edward Errington, the townes fool, buried. Died of the peste." We come to 1599: "Clement Roderforthe, gentleman, was executed in the castle, August 22nd." And so the tale goes on through the centuries, and so I go on through my pages and I see them used up, and the half has not been told you!

I take down Grey's *Chorographia*, the first history

of Newcastle, and my eyes light upon some words which are as true to-day as they were in the days of the old-fashioned chronicler: "Camden calls Newcastle *Ocellus*, the eye of the North, the harth that warmeth the south parts of this kingdom with fire—an Egypt to all the shires of the North, in time of famine, for bread."

CHAPTER VI

ON SLOGANS

Now,—Esperance! Percy! and set on!

Henry IV.

Sound drums and trumpets, boldly and cheerfully,
God and Saint George! Richmond and Victory!

Richard III.

From Grey's *Chorographia* I loot the following explanatory note which weaves itself into my business:

"The nobility and gentry of the North are of great antiquity, and can produce more ancient families, than any other part of England: many of them gentry before the Conquest; the rest came in with William the Conqueror. The noblemen and gentry of the North hath been alwayes imployed in their native countrey in the warres of the Kings of England, against the Scots; all of them holding their lands in knights service, to attend the warres in their own persons, with horse and speare, as the manner of fighting was in those days. Not a gentleman amongst them, but hath his castle or tower; and so it was

divided into a number of baronies; the lords whereof, in times past, before King Edward the First's dayes, went commonly under the name of barons, although some of them were of no great living."

Some philosopher said somewhere or other that a really civilized people should not depend so pathetically on what remains from past ages for the satisfaction of its æsthetic sense. He was speaking of "antiques," and not of slogans, but a slogan is a beautiful antique, and our philosopher would doubtless regard a love for the spirit of it as a barbaric characteristic. Then I am a barbarian. I love slogans. I wish they were in everyday use, instead of existing only in brazen advertisements, mostly American. Americans, the greatest masters of advertisement writing since the day of the first publicity agent, Law-Giver Moses, know all about the carrying power of slogans, which go back to Biblical times, and are mentioned, in the Scriptures, along with banners and standards, again and again. Indeed, there is no finer example of all that a slogan ought to be than the grand war-cry used by the tribes in revolt against David, "To your tents, O Israel!" or that of Gideon, clashing with the Midianites, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!" or again, in later times, "Hallelujah!" The thrill in the words makes it easy for us to comprehend the force which a stirring slogan possessed. The rallying war-calls of the clans roused the fighting spirit of hot-blooded

men, and sent them rushing forward to soul-shaking enterprises.

When William the Conqueror fought the Anglo-Saxons at Battle, the Saxon armies used as a slogan, "Holy Crosse—God Almighty! Holy Crosse—God Almighty!" and later in the fray, *Oucgt! Oucgt!* ("Out! Out!") The Normans cried: *Nostre Dame—Dieu ay nouzade!* ("Our Lady and God help us!") And those qualified to judge hold that the Royal *Dieu et mon droit* was a slogan first and a motto afterwards. Said Richard the First: "Not we but *God and our right* have vanquished France at Gisors."

In addition to the gathering means of the slogans, Northumbrians, like the men of the Highlands, used beacon fires, a form of news broadcasting invented by Sinon in the Trojan wars. The Romans employed torch-lights, and no doubt their "glaring bale-fires" gleamed from the outlying stations and flung messages to the warriors holding the Great Wall. The "braw fichters" of the Borders knew well the Hot-Trod, that alarm-wisp of lighted tow or straw set on top of a spear. The compound word was a term peculiar to the Border country, and signifies, according to Mr. Brockett in his *Glossary of North-country Words*, Hot-Foot, Hot-Trod, a pursuit which must follow immediately after the call is sounded. The Scots of the Highlands used the Fiery Cross as a summons. One arm of the wooden cross was burnt

or burning, and from the other hung a white cloth, stained with blood. From hand to hand this message passed with extraordinary speed, just as the carrying of the Hot-Trod flung its "bale-way" over Northumberland. The implication of such signals is described by Sir Walter Scott: "At the sight of the Fiery Cross," he says, "every man from sixteen years old to sixty, capable of bearing arms, was obliged instantly to repair in his best accoutrements to the place of rendezvous. He who failed to appear suffered the extremities of fire and sword." In Scotland the last instance of authorized use of the fiery message occurred in 1685, when the Privy Council of Scotland ordered the calling up of all the fighting men of Fife and Kinross to oppose Argyll. Covertly the Cross was circulated among the Highland clans during the rebellions of 1715 and 1745.

But I must return to my slogans. Need-fires are side-issues.

Slogans, then, variously spelt, but slogans none the less, were used in the Middle Ages all over the European continent. To the French a slogan was a *cri de guerre*, to the Italians *clamor militaris*. They served many purposes—as watchwords by which members of one clan might know the other by night or in battle-stress, as rousing incitements to attack, and as distributors of vengeance. As regards the exact meaning of the word, Mr. Brockett, than whom there can be no higher authority, derives

Slogan from the Gaelic Slaughghairm, the signal for battle among the Highland clans.

In Patten's *Account of Somerset's Expedition* we find the following quaint comments:

"That whereas alweys, both in al townes of war, and in al campes of armies, quietnes and stilnes without nois is principally in the night, after the watch is set, observed (I need not reason why). Yet our Northern Prikkers, the Borderers, notwithstanding, with great enormitie (as thought me) and not unlyke (to be playn) unto a masterless hounde houlynge in a hieway, when he hath lost hym he wayted upon, sum hoopyng, sum whistleyng, and most with cryine, *a Berwyke! a Berwyke! a Fenwyke! a Fenwyke! a Bulmer! a Bulmer!* or so otherwise as theyr capteins names wear, never linnde those troublous and daungerous noyses al the nyghte long. They said they did it to fynde out their captein and fellowes; but if the soldiours of other countries and shores had used the same manner, in that case we shoold have oftymes had the state of our campe more like the outrage of a dissolute huntyng, than the quiet of a wel ordered army."

Not a great number of the glorious slogans of Northumberland, which once thrilled the silent ones who lie in all old churchyards or upon the lonely hillsides where they fell, have come down to us. Some have been converted into proud mottoes—their grip and their swing bewrayeth them.

Name cries, such as "A Percy!" "A Fenwyke!" "A Shaftoe!" were used by men serving under the banner of the warrior commanding, by the clansmen and supporters. District slogans commemorated the place from whence the fighters came, and sometimes tallied with the name of the leader. Perhaps the most telling examples are the descriptive cries, sharp, clean sentences, such as "Forth to the field!" used by the English at Flodden; "Saint George! Forward!" "Thousands for a Percy!" or "A holy day!" the cry of the Scots on the English Borders, from which slogan, because of their constant use of it, the Halliday family obtained their surname. Every day spent in raiding and looting the Northumbrian Border was to a good Scot a holy day.

There are more sides to slogan philosophy than I have space to record. The brave cries concealed and helped forward the highest enterprises. Who can forget the immortal exploit of Douglas at Stanhope as he sought, under cover of night, to show contempt for the King Edward, who had used before Paris the *cri de guerre*, "Ha! Saint George!" Crossing the River Wear with his clansmen, and concealing them in a wood, the Scottish chieftain went forward alone. "Ha! Saint George!" he cried, and so passed the guards of the Castle. Presently, wandering through the vast stone passages, the supposed Englishman came upon a young soldier musing by a fire. "I dread sair for the Black

Douglas!" he sighed. "You sall have cause gif that I may!" answered the Scot quietly, passing on to the Royal quarters, where he raised the gallant shout of "Douglas! Douglas! Douglas ever!" and blowing his horn, escaped in the confusion.

Great poets were they, those age-old word slingers, unknowingly massing and arranging their linguistic tools for posterity. How many of us know that our national anthem is based upon a password used by the Royal Navy in 1545? Henry the Eighth's Lord-Admiral set forth the scheme of it, and thus it ran: "The watch-word in the night shalbe thus: God save King Henrye; th'other shall answer: And long to raign over us."

As the Tudors seated themselves firmly upon the throne, so their crude methods of reducing the power of the English nobles were perfected. Foremost among the many devices was the attempted putting down of personal slogans. Henry the Seventh made an Act forbidding the use of battle-cries on the plea that they promoted discord between great families, forgetting the old order prescribing the use of a slogan for the comfort of a soldier. Patten called the heroic chants, "idle pribble-prabbles," but Patten was a pessimistic old cynic, and, after all, making an Act in ancient times was one thing and enforcing it another. The warlike challenges rang on adown the years, and in every Border raid, "cries a guerre and slughones shake the vaulted heaven."

Incidentally, before we reach, at long last, the characteristic slogans of Northumberland, let me comment upon the extraordinary appositeness of the Irish war-cry, "Uboo!" or "Ubooboo!" from which is derived the Irish word, now Anglicized, "hubbub." Another injustice to Ireland!

Place aux Clan Fenwyke, the most warlike and redoubtable of all the warlike and redoubtable clans in Northumberland, second only, if second at all, to the House of Percy, whose banner of the Silver Crescent rarely appeared without that of the burning Phœnix of the Fenwyke.

From the fen country round about Stamfordham this Saxon family originated, and later rose to great power and possessions. Up to the reign of William the Third their principal stronghold was near Wallington, but what is left of Fenwyke Castle is to-day used as a farm-house. The far-flung slogan of the clan, heard in a hundred fights, was "A Fenwyke! A Fenwyke! A Fenwyke!" William Richardson, in 1816, wrote a Gathering Ode dedicated to the Fenwyke, which was regarded as a famous *tour de force.* The author "supposes an inroad of the Scots to have taken place in the absence of the Percy in Palestine, and that this ode, in the manner of the highland pibroch, was used for the gathering of the Fenwyke to repel them." It is a long ode, and the first verse runs thus:

Pipe of Northumbria sound!
War pipe of Alnwicke!
Wake the wild hills around,
Summon the Fenwicke:
Percy at Paynim war;
Fenwicke stands foremost;
Scots in array from far,
Swell wide their war-host.

The Fenwyke clan is mentioned in ballad after ballad, and the *Raid of the Reidswire* has an allusion to the unconquerable following that sets you marching with them:

We saw come marching over the knowes,
Five hundred Fenwicks in a flock—
With jack and speir, and bowes all bent,
And warlike weapons at their will.

The slogans of the Percys: "Percy! Percy!" "A Percy! A Percy!" "Esperance! Percy!" and we know how this rare call appealed to Shakespeare. "Thousands for a Percy!" The last was a temporary flattery raised and coined during the Pilgrimage of Grace, 1536. For his reluctant adherence to which unsuccessful revolt Sir Thomas Percy was hanged, drawn, and quartered at Tyburn in 1537.

"A Shaftoe! A Shaftoe!" cried the ancient family of Bavington; and "A Shaftan! and a Fenwyke!" in the *Raid of the Reidswire*, as the old ballad relates:

Then there was naught but bow and speir,
And every man pulled out a brand;
"A Shaftan! and a Fenwyke!" there;
Gude Symington was slain frae hand.

The same old ballad-chronicle records the use in the Raid of one of the Tynedale slogans—"Tindaill to it!" "A Tindall! A Tindall!" was also raised in the romantic affray as the voice of the district rather than the family of Tindale which was practically extinct a century or two before the period of the Raid.

We passed the ruins of Thirlwall Castle upon the Roman Wall. "A Thirlewall! A Thirlewall! A Thirlewall!" heralded the onrush of the clan.

The Heron of Marmion's day—

> Sir Hugh the Heron bold,
> Baron of Twisell, and of Ford,
> And Captain of the Hold—

used the telling slogan of his race, "Hastings!" in which was centred some ancient feat of arms.

"Tarsetburn and Tarretburn! Yet! Yet! Yet! was the war-cry of the men hailing from the wild district above Bellingham on the North Tyne, into which river the Tarset and Tarret burns find their way.

> Up wi' Tarset and Tarretburn,
> And down wi' the Rede and Tyne!

was a provocative and much later variation of the Tarset slogan which was an unfailing signal for "mysorders within the said countrye of Tynedale."

Many name-slogans became famous far beyond the Borders, and slogans from remote Marches familiarized

themselves to the Northern men in their own "North partes," as also when following the standards of alien warriors in other countries. "Stanley! Stanley!" resounded over Flodden, and "were the last words of Marmion"; "Rosslyne! Rosslyne!" cried the English at Aberdeen in 1335, until the dying chieftain bade them "Cry Mowbray! Rosslyne is gone!" "A Warwicke! A Warwicke!" was the slogan in the Rebellion of 1469, when the men of the North countrie under Sir John Conyers joined the Northamptonshire men, who "with dyvers of the Northerne men, by them procured in this furie," won Banbury Field against Pembroke.

"Sent Andrewe!" invoked the Scots at Otterburn, and "Sent George!" the English. "Douglas! Douglas!" and "Percy! Percy!" But "Sent George!" louder still, for "the blyssyd and holy martyr Saynt George is patron of this realme of Englonde, and the crye of men of warre."

So *The Golden Legend* tells.

CHAPTER VII

CUSTOMS, FOLK-LORE, AND SOME HABITS

The breach of custom is breach of all.
Cymbeline.

We talk with goblins and elfish sprites.
Comedy of Errors.

Custom is not a small thing. It is the great guide of human life, and as each epoch passes, and with it those customs which reconciled us to so much, we look upon the old-fashioned ideas and beliefs and ways as something fragrant that is lost. We cannot revivify them—they cannot come again. In my country we have a proverb that says: "Custom must be indulged by custom or custom will die." And it is true. These are days of fret and change, no custom lasts longer than a week. I suppose that is the reason why chroniclers of places and people never leave out the ancient ways of them.

Some of the rural fancies, dying out now, are rarely beautiful in their own untutored way, and many of them display nature-knowledge of a high order, embracing as they do all sorts of objects,

animate and inanimate. Northumbrians of olden days almost invariably called the adder the hag-worm, a name that by all prescriptive right belongs to the common blind or slow-worm, and the latter was credited with being much more dangerous than any viper; an erroneous belief helped along, no doubt, by Shakespeare's definition of the most harmless of crawling things. He called it, you remember, "the eyeless venom'd worm."

A little rhyme my Northumbrian grandfather was fond of repeating, to my utter terror, places the "worms" correctly. The reptiles were holding a grim conversation, and the blind-worm lamented its deficiency of sight:

> The hag-worm said to the ether,
> If I had ane ee, as thou hast twae,
> There should never a bairn on the gait gae,
> But the wee step-bairn that drees a' the wae.

The hag-worm, you notice, knew all about the ill-treated, unwanted step-child of all classic fairy-tales.

Northumbrians read the Immortal One diligently. He said:

> It is the bright day that brings forth the adder,
> And that craves wary walking;

and everywhere in the North the ether, or adder, is singled out as typifying the return of spring:

> March wind
> Kindles the ether and blooms the whin.

Sometimes the charming lines run:

March wind
Wakens the ether and buds the thorn.

We get another instance of the aptness of the nature-calendar in the well-known rhyme:

The cuckoo's a bonny bird,
He whistles as he flies,
He brings us good tidings,
He tells us no lies.
He sucks little birds' eggs,
To make his voice clear;
And never sings Cuckoo
Till summer draws near.

Another song of the seasons known to all the peasantry runs:

The cuckoo comes of mid March,
And cucks of mid Aperill,
And gauns away of Midsummer month,
When the corn begins to fill.

The little community of Larbottle once tried, like the wise men of Gotham, to hedge in the cuckoo. It was an idea of the period that to the influence of the cuckoo Larbottle owed the summer, and that if the bird could be held "within a pinfold" there would be no winter to face. The villagers in great haste built a wall around a grove much frequented by cuckoos, and then rested content, hoping for never-ending summer. When the ungrateful bird flew away, the wall project was not condemned as foolish—not for

nothing had Larbottle folk listened to the simple creeds of their forefathers. It was not high enough. There lay the mistake. A foot or so more and the cage would have been secure.

A quaint superstition, prevalent to this day, is a belief that a dead man's bees cannot thrive. They are said to be unable to find pasturage for themselves even among the luxuriant heather, and hives that have belonged to someone recently dead rarely find a purchaser.

When the horned cattle hold up their heads and sniff and lick their bodies *against* the hair the farmer knows that rain is coming, and when the ducks become conversational the barometer is falling.

Two centuries agone the Northumbrian farmers had a quaint method of ridding themselves of rats. This was accomplished by means of a formal, written notice, and one or two of these curious documents are to be seen to-day. The large sheet of paper I was shown was endorsed in faded writing, "To all the Ratts in the House, Barns, Biers, Stables and Out-houses belonging to So-and-So of So-and-So." And — written cornerwise — "Be shour you Lay this Billet wheare the Ratts Resorts."

"A BILLET FOR RATTS

"This is to discharge you all from this Place, as you are bad Neighbours, and Disturbers of our peace; but you must go and Lodge with Mr. Such-and-

Such, at Slaley, which are not above a mile to the nor-east from this place. Thare you will have good quarters, and Plenty of Food; so adue, bad Neighbours, adue."

Pleasant, wasn't it, for Mr. Such-and-Such, a mile to the nor-east, if the notice to quit had any efficacy!

There was, too, the age-old belief that the seventh son, born without a girl intervening, had the power of healing diseases by a touch. It was always said that on the seventh one's breast or side would be found the seal of the Pleiades. Well do I remember stripping the gardener's boy at a house near Long Benton because he was a likely specimen for the Pleiades hallmark. Childish romanticists believe what they wish to believe, and to this day I can conjure up the mysterious affirmation of the gods that my fancy outlined on the boy's fair skin, and recall the eager, "Hae I whit ye seek?" and my solemn assurance, given in all good faith, that he was indeed stamped with the constellation of the seven stars.

Oh, youth! Oh, dreams!

Holly is masculine and feminine. "He" is prickly and sharp, "She" grows unarmed and pointless, and possesses marvellous properties if gathered on a Friday at midnight by somebody capable of keeping silence during the time of the picking to the next day at dawn. The leaves, which must be collected in a three-cornered handkerchief, are to be gone over,

and nine good specimens selected. Each of the nine must be knotted, and replaced in the handkerchief, which is then put under the pillow, after which the experimenter goes to sleep, and dreams dreams which unlock the secrets of futurity.

After a short sojourn in Northumberland the much-written-of burr becomes noticeable. People from other counties persist in the idea that a Northumberland man cannot pronounce the letter *r*, and that he slurs it in consequence, and whenever it is imitated this misconception exists and renders the attempt absurd. The burr is an exaggerated *r*, not an elided *r*. It is by no means peculiar to Northumberland, but in no portion of this island does the feature of speech extend over a wide area except in Northumberland, and it is only in the country districts and workaday sections of the county that the burr, which carried with it an unmistakable identity, is universal. Other times, other manners. To quote Mr. Heslop: "It has long been the desire of Northumbrians to emancipate themselves from what was at one time the common speech of all classes in the county."

It was a general argument that the Danes bestowed the burr upon the northmen, and a popular tradition that the rather attractive quality began as a personal defect of Hotspur's. There is no doubt but that the tradition existed independently of Shakespeare's striking reference. The peculiarity

of Hotspur's enunciation became as well known as the physical disability—and Hotspur's thickness of speech was a disability and no burr—of that hero of a later date, Prince Charles Edward, who was web-fingered.

In this manner did Shakespeare speak in praise of Henry Percy and his characteristic defect:

> He was, indeed, the glass
> Wherein the noble youth did dress themselves:
> He had no legs that practised not his gait;
> And speaking thick, which nature made his blemish,
> Became the accents of the valiant;
> For those that could speak low and tardily
> Would turn their own perfection to abuse,
> To seem like him, so that in speech, in gait,
> In diet, in affections of delight,
> In military rules, humours of the blood,
> He was the mark and glass, copy and book,
> That fashioned others.

The play *King Henry IV.*, in which this delineation of Hotspur occurs, was written almost two hundred years after the Battle of Shrewsbury, and ballad-literature and tradition had made the name and attributes of the noble Percy famous throughout England.

If the Northumbrian overdoes the *r*, he levels it up by throwing away the *h* in proper names. Hedgehope becomes Hedgup; Longhirst is Longirst; Rookhope, Rookup; Killhope, Killup; and so on and on. And throughout the whole county place-names

that have *g* in them are never pronounced with the *g* hard. Thus Bellingham becomes Bellinjum; and Whittingham, Whittinjum; Edlingham, Edlinjum; and the only exception which proves the rule is Chillingham. "And that," to quote the famous weaver of fairy-stories, "is as it should be."

Northumberland had its fairies, but they cannot be classified as the accepted type. They were never the lightsome, care-free elves of warmer parts. Fairies, as a race, were susceptible to climatic conditions, and the tough little creatures who made nothing of Northumbrian winters were built on the lines of Grimm's goblins rather than on those of Shakespeare's Oberon and Titania, gossamer-winged sprites who shunned the frozen ways of the north and sought the suns of the south to gild their revelries.

The joyous colony at Mab's Hill come nearest the ideal. According to the records of old time the Mab's Hill contingent followed fairy fashions in green mantles and pointed caps, just as the elves of the moorlands took care to match the brown and gold of the bracken. The genuine "Brown men of the Muirs" were of a different order from the harmless gnomes who preferred the open heath to a fairy hill. The "Brown men" were malignant spirits who specialized in extracting for their own use the brains of any human beings found asleep. To this practice tradition ascribes the unusual and

uncanny intelligence displayed by this variety of fairy.

The Elf-hills near Cambo—that is, Cambo Hill, where Sir John de Cambo kept watch and ward—had, as permanent tenants, a gregarious band of "the little people" who did not in the least resent that their stronghold was often invaded and used again and again as a signal tower on which the wisp of tow mounted on a spear-point was set on fire when a raid was imminent. The gloaming, or the pale light of dawn, was the best time to see fairies, but wherever they danced or trod they took care to make no footprints. No fairy was ever traced by footprints. And though the Northumbrian fairies lived in green hills, as their cousins all over the country made a habit of doing, they sometimes, for warmth perhaps, took up a residence in the barns or outhouses of farms or mansions. But these eccentrics were not numerous—the romantic hills of the Border, the rides of some forest, the sides of a frothing burn, or the tops of lonely crags were the favourite haunts of the average fairy.

Three more or less famous giants whose tall forms "affronted the skies" figure largely in fairy-lore. Again and again one reads of them, or their names, and where they lived. Cor, Ben, and Con, and the brothers lived at Corbridge, Benfieldside, and Consett. They have left no memories behind them save a vague tradition that the trio possessed

a talent for throwing a massive hammer three leagues. Why they threw it, or where, folk-history does not say.

For one lightsome sprite there are two gnomes, moor spirits, and ghostly visitants. I have gleaned enough "authentic" ghost stories to keep busy the Psychical Research Society for years to come. Some of these tales are extremely taking by reason of the acumen and pawky humour displayed by the mysterious beings — as a rule ghosts and spirits possess no sense of humour whatever. All countries specialize in one particular brand of wizardry. In the Isle of Man it is the "Phynnodderee," a sort of hairy hobgoblin; in Alaska it is a vengeful spirit who lives in the Nunatacks, or peaks, which are to be seen in the heart of the glaciers; in the Caucasus there is the imp called the "domovoi," whose proper home is behind the kitchen stove. These are all immortals of which I know something. Northumberland's chief output in the unearthly was a variety of dragon-serpent which, as became people for whom Shakespeare wrote plays, they called "worms." A good many districts in their time suffered from an unwanted "laidley worm" — "laidley" being a northern corruption for loathly. The most famous was the energetic example of Spindleston Heugh, around whose depredations was entwined a ballad said to have been written by the mountain bard, Duncan Frasier, who lived on

Cheviot, A.D. 1270. The "Lambton Worm" is an equally celebrated character, but its biography belongs to the folk-lore of the adjoining county. Pass, Lambton Worm, and all's well!

The story runs like this: Once upon a time—you would not have me begin a fairy-story worthy of credence upon any other note?—Once upon a time a King lived in Bamburgh Castle, and Bamburgh is just the sort of castle in which you would expect to find a very majestic monarch. He had a most beautiful daughter. Kings' daughters in those days were either very lovely or very ugly—there was no compromising. Princess Margaret was lovely, and, after the manner of those lovely daughters of mythological kings, was beloved by everyone. You know how it always was. Animals turned to her like flowers to the sun, old women blessed her as she walked, children strewed flowers in her path.

Quite suddenly the King decided to marry again. He knew nothing of the antecedents of his bride, but she was good to look at, and possibly His Majesty went no further than that. In reality the new Queen was a witch and past mistress of all varieties of sorcery. It was not long before she decided that the beautiful princess must be disposed of somehow. It was a simple matter to turn Margaret into a tiny serpent which began small but ended in a huge reptile that surprised itself as it did the whole

country-side. Only Spindleston Heugh could accommodate so vast a "worm."

> At this day may be seen the cave,
> Which held her folded up,
> And the stone trough, the very same,
> Out of which she did sup.

And now began a terrible period in the history of Bamburgh.

> For seven miles east, and seven miles west,
> And seven miles north and south,
> No blade of grass or corn could grow,
> So venomous was her mouth.

Now Margaret had a brother named Childy Wynd (after whom Wynd Street in Bamburgh is named). He had gone over the sea, a-buccaneering with thirty and three merry men. In Childy Wynd's time we had not the so-called cheap postage of to-day, and it took many months ere—

> Word went west and word went east,
> And a word is gone over the sea,
> That a Laidley-worm in Spindleston-Heughs
> Would ruin the North Country.

As soon as Childy Wynd "got wit" of it, he wished to be at Spindleston "the desperate worm to see." He fitted his ship with masts of the rowan tree—a most excellent precaution, for the Queen, who was a witch, sent off her witch-wives to intercept the barque as it neared the coast of Northumberland, with orders to "sink without trace." The rowan-

tree masts, with their renowned fending-off properties, confounded the knavish trick, and the hags returned discomforted. As a final effort the Queen hurled a shipload of armed men at the Childy Wynd, who, being a person of resource, speedily routed them. The worst difficulty was the worm itself. To judge by the quaint words of the old ballad the reception prepared for Childy by the worm was something too horrible:

> The worm lept up, the worm lept down,
> She plaited around the stone;
> And ay as the ship came to the land
> She banged it off again.

The Childy being a bit of a navigator knew that this continuous banging was bad for the stoutest vessel. He ran out to sea again, and finally beached his ship on Budle Sand, a small port near Bamburgh.

The worm was there to receive him! And now the remarkable inner consciousness that invariably belonged to those people accustomed to meeting supernaturals asserted itself. Childy knew that the worm was not what it seemed, and he was in no way surprised when it addressed him as follows:

> Oh! quit thy sword and bend thy bow,
> And give me kisses three;
> For though I am a poisonous worm,
> No hurt I'll do to thee.

Childy Wynd bestowed the three kisses, whereupon the "laidley" serpent crept into a hole to emerge presently as a beautiful lady.

No clothing had this lady fine;
To keep her from the cold;
He took his mantle from him about,
And round her did it fold.

The brother with his miraculously recovered sister went up to the castle, where they found the Queen, "All pale, and sore afraid," as well she might be, for Childy, suddenly developing the most advanced necromantic talent, turned his stepmother into a toad.

And that is as it should be.

In my island of Man it was always held that there was no magic strong enough to have any effect on a running stream, and Robert Burns was of this opinion, as we know from his tale of Tam o' Shanter. But in Northumberland, the duergar, a species of imp which lived on the Simonside Hills, between Rothbury and Elsdon, could bring to a standstill the swiftest river. They were, of course, exceptionally evil demons, for—

Spirits that have o'er water government
Are to mankind alike malevolent.

From a distance you might mistake the duergar for bright fireflies, for they were night spirits, and always tripped about with torches in their diminutive hands, but at close quarters you knew them for what they were. Not many human beings met the duergar and lived to tell the tale, but in the sixteenth

century a miller of Elsdon became celebrated by reason of an interview he had with one of the dreaded imps. The miller had lost his way over the mountains, and at the darkest hour of night saw a beam from what he took to be a lamp. Making his way to it he found a tenantless hut on the floor of which was a fire glowing red. He thought the place was the temporary home of the Faas, for either side of the glowing embers lay two stout gate-posts waiting to be broken up, and in a corner was stacked a quantity of brushwood such as the gipsies used for making besoms. The miller trimmed the fire, and took a seat on a big whinstone beside the hearth. A curious, soft dragging sound impelled him to look round. An extraordinary little human figure crossed the earth floor and took a seat on a second whinstone, placed directly opposite the miller's hard stool.

Now this Elsdon miller knew something of the ways of fairies—instinct told him that he was in the presence of an immortal of some variety, and he turned over and over in his mind the course he ought to pursue. Speaking to a fairy without the "open sesame" of "Let me introduce" has always been a risky flouting of convention. The miller kept silence, and from the corner of his eye took note of his companion's hollow cheeks, cruel features, short strong limbs, and, strangest of all, the webbed fingers that gave the duergar mastery over water.

As the terrible imp warmed his hairy hands at the fire they looked like the feet of a small duck.

The hut grew colder and colder. Picking up a piece of wood the miller broke it across his knee and laid the halves on the fire. The duergar snorted in derision, and seizing one of the massive gate-posts, which towered above him, broke it over his knee and flung the bits on the blaze. The miller, thoroughly frightened by witnessing this example of unearthly strength, did not move again. The fire died out, the wind whistled and shrieked through the ill-built hut, but the night passed, and with the first streak of sunrise came the realization that there was no hut, no duergar, no opposite whinstone. The miller's whinstone was still in its place, and he still sat upon it, but it had turned into the pinnacled top of an abyss down which the first forward step would have cast him.

A duergar or two inhabited Rimside Moor, that bleak waste of heath which stretches from near the Morpeth road to high uplands beyond Rothbury. The moor was ever an area of enchantment and dark mystery. "As wide as Rimside Moor" is a Northumbrian comparative when it comes to anything immeasurable. There is also the saying which always seemed to me to convey a deep impression of awe: "If ye were on Rimside Moor at twelve o'clock o' night, wi' a black sow by the tail, ye wadna be here to-night." In the days of my youth I associated

the old saying with witches—I don't know why. Perhaps because we were so fond of trying to find the ancient taking-off places which retained, even so late as my day, the marks of the broomstick ends!

General belief in witchcraft was dying out two hundred years ago, but traces of it existed in wild places to the latter end of the nineteenth century. For what other reason than an hereditary awe of witches did we as children cut ourselves from a growing rowan tree a branch that had never touched the ground?

Rowan tree and red thread
Put the witches to their speed.

Once upon a night of long ago the Lord of Seaton Delavel was riding home from Newcastle attended by a retainer, and their way led past a chapel, now in ruins at Wallsend. As Delavel passed he noticed with astonishment brilliant lights where no lights ever shone. Curiosity led him to dismount, and creeping softly across the shadowy burial-ground he reached the nearest window. He looked in, and his eyes met a sight so unholy that for the moment he shrank away. On a table, illumined at the four corners by some brightly burning substance flaming in human skulls, was the body of a woman unwrapped from her shroud, and around the chapel, occupied in the preparation of charms, sat many bearded old hags. One of the most evil-looking among them was engaged in hacking bits of flesh

from the corpse upon the table, and these an attendant carried towards the belfry to a fire fed by broken coffins on which a cauldron frizzled and frothed. Delavel stood quite still, and took careful note of the hags as one or the other of them turned to the skulls and with skinny forefingers stirred the inflammable substance within. Then of a sudden the resolve came to him to disperse the evil company. Putting his whole weight behind his shoulder he burst the door and rushed in, a brave and gallant figure. The witches, surprised, scattered this way and that in panic. Some took to flight on broomsticks by way of the belfry openings, others escaped through the door, but Delavel made straight for the dissector with the knife, and in spite of her writhings and ravings held her firmly, and presently carried her off to his horse, which tradition says "much resented the unsavoury burden." For once in a way a witch did not contrive to escape. Delavel held her captive until the sentence by burning could be carried out. The witch was to die on the sands of Seaton Delavel, and her last request was for two new wooden dishes that had never been touched by water. With the lack of astuteness so noticeable in ordinary folk when dealing with supernaturals the dishes were given to the old hag, and into them, as the smoke and flames rose about her, she placed her feet. A strange incantation ascended—and in a trice the

witch soared away on the sea breeze like an eagle escaped. Higher and higher she rose, and then—one of the wooden platters fell to the ground, and after it, as a dead bird, fell the evil spirit. The wooden dish had been in water, and was thereby useless as a witch saver. Taking no further risk Delavel himself flung her on the fire once more, where she shrivelled up and perished.

CHAPTER VIII

SOME NORTHUMBRIAN WORTHIES

> For mine own part
> I shall be glad to hear of noble men.
>
> *Julius Cæsar.*

Old Northumbria produced poets and ballad makers of rare quality, but in these later years no front-rank writer or poet has arisen. Swinburne is sometimes claimed as of the county, and he was to some extent connected with the old family of Swinburne, which is very worthily represented to-day by Sir Hubert Swinburne of Capheaton, but the poet had very little Northumbrian blood, and we must rule him out. He loved the county, and his psalm of praise *Winter in Northumberland* is the tribute of a worshipper.

Try as we may to juggle our geese into swans, the fact remains that no latter-day pen-wielder had, or has, the quality which made Robert Louis the Beloved affirm: "We are all mighty fine fellows, but we cannot write like William Hazlitt." The little sentence sums up the situation. Though we

number many literary people who have accomplished "mighty fine" work, they "cannot write like William Hazlitt." Great journalists? And are they not literary? Yes, and yes, but in a hair's-breadth different way. In journalism modern Northumberland more than holds its own. W. T. Stead was born at Embleton, and everyone of the craft knows there has never been a more capable "newspaper man." Joseph Cowen eclipsed most of his contemporaries, and was an orator of renown, but a journalist first, and the proprietor of the *Newcastle Daily Chronicle*, which in the days of its Radical, Imperialist, yet anti-Socialist policy was a power in the land. A fine statue of Joseph Cowen, "sculpt," as Mrs. Sheridan would say, by John Tweed, stands in the Westgate Road that takes its name from the West Gate of the city, once a "mightye stronge thing."

If it were fitting to talk of the living great, I could mention several front-rank journalists (such as John o' London, who is John o' Newcastle too) who more than uphold Tyneside in the Street of Adventure to-day, but I am chronicling only those worthies who have passed to the Land of Silence. And were I to deal at length with all notable Northumbrians, and include historical characters such as Duns Scotus, Minot, Bernard Gilpin, and Alcuin, I should far exceed the limitations of a chapter. There are numberless celebrities who strike

one as being typical of their order. Great lawyers headed by Eldon, Stowell, and Creswall; men of science represented by Lord Armstrong, the Stephensons, the Hancocks, Buddle, Wood, Sopwith, and Dickinson; notable musicians led by Avison and Shield; artists of the quality of Bewick, Duncan, Richardson, Good, Harvey, Robson, and Martin; capable historians as John Horsley, Brand, and Henry Bourne, Collingwood Bruce, Cadwallader Bates, and so on and on.

Some poets are so bad they become interesting and so pompous they never die. For that reason, perhaps, Mark Akenside gained a place among the poets of the eighteenth century. He was born in 1721 at the Butcher Bank, the name of which has been changed to that of Akenside Hill, and he practised as a surgeon in Newcastle before migrating to London where he found himself the fashion and physician to the Court. A portion of the voluminous *Pleasures of the Imagination*, which Dr. Johnson found so insufferably boring, was written at Hexham. In spite of the great man's condemnation Akenside's pedantic poem gained popularity and went through many editions. Like many other men of his county Akenside possessed no sense of humour. People with the saving grace rarely pose, and Akenside was a poseur. He posed long and whole-heartedly, but he never ceased to be a poseur. Famous characters have a way of appearing before the bar

of imagination, and the poet stands there, an artificial, trivial sort of person, scented and elegantly dressed, bent upon suppressing his humble beginnings in his father's butcher's shop.

Poles apart is that poet of the people Joe Wilson. He wrote verse-songs which sang themselves into local life, and no poet can ask more. He was born in Stowell Street in 1841, and as a little boy he used to sit beside his mother, as she plaited straw bonnets for the ladies of Newcastle, scribbling his childish thoughts on odd scraps of paper. The words—his own — inscribed upon his tombstone in the Old Cemetery at Jesmond tell you what those thoughts must have been:

> It's been me aim t' hev a place
> I' th' hearts o' th' Newcassel people,
> Wi' writin' bits o' hyemly songs
> Aw think they'll sing.

Joe Wilson wrote his famous "Aw wish yor Muther wad cum," and "Dinnet clash the door" in 1863, but those simple songs, instinct though they are with the spirit of gentleness and domesticity, are well-nigh forgotten. This is no age of homely things. But not so long ago Wilson's words were constantly on the lips of his own people. Well do I remember my grandfather, who "haddint Muther's ways," ejaculating to our complete puzzlement as we demanded some impossible thing of him, "Aw wish yor Muther wad cum!"

Northumbrians are justly proud of the *Coquetdale Fishing Songs* of Robert Roxby and Thomas Doubleday. The latter was a true poet, and many of his sonnets reach a high level of excellence, but it is by his angling verse that he will be remembered. As Dr. Spence Watson said: "They are the only sporting songs that have ever been written which, whilst preserving exactly every detail and feature of the sport, are yet instinct with the true spirit of poetry."

Charles Avison, the composer and musician, is best recalled by his anthem "Sound the loud timbrel." On his tombstone in St. Andrew's are some words by Browning:

> On the list
> Of worthies, who by help of pipe or wire,
> Expressed in sound rough rage or soft desire,
> Thou, whilom of Newcastle, organist.

John Horsley, who wrote the dignified *Britannia Romana*, was born in Newcastle at the end of the seventeenth century, as were his contemporaries William and Elizabeth Elstob, the Saxon scholars, whose erudite studies were far ahead of the education of the period.

John Collingwood Bruce, the historian of the Roman Wall, was born in 1805. He was the son of the revered headmaster of the famous Percy Street Academy, and on the death of the latter took over the school. The late Mr. Justice Bruce was a son

of the author-historian, and published a *Life of Dr. Collingwood Bruce*, to whom there is a fine monument in Bewick's Porch in the Cathedral of St. Nicholas. At the feet of the recumbent figure rests an open book, symbolical of his great work, *The Roman Wall.*

The narrow alleys, called Chares, of old "Newcassel," have all but disappeared. In one of them near the Sandgate, immortalized in "The Keel Row," was born, in 1751, John Scott, the son of a coal-fitter. He became Lord Chancellor of England, and Twiss says of him: "Lord Eldon held for a longer time than any of his predecessors the highest civil office in these kingdoms, and during a quarter of a century exercised an influence almost unprecedented in the cabinets of successive Sovereigns." John Scott's elder brother, William, became Baron Stowell, Judge of the High Court of Admiralty, and the two eminent brothers, though six years divided their ages, ran their official course abreast of each other. Of Baron Stowell Surtees said: "He has stamped the image of his mind on the international jurisprudence of the world." That is so, but his brother, John Scott, did more than that—he has stamped the fragrance of romance upon the minds of all the world that loves a lover.

Retrace our steps by way of the Sandhill, and look up at the once fine houses in which the merchants and rich citizens of Newcastle resided. In 1772 that

house of many windows was the home of Aubone Surtees, a prosperous banker, and from that casement, marked by a blue pane, Bessie Surtees, the banker's daughter, descended the traditional rope ladder and eloped to the Gretna Green of Coldstream with humble John Scott, the coal-fitter's son. Twenty years later the gossips—and there were gossips in Newcastle in those days, let me tell you—who had predicted, "She'll only regret it once, and that'll be always!" heard the bells a-ringing for Sir John Scott, who had been appointed His Majesty's Attorney-General, and later again the merry peals saluted the two romanticists who came back as Lord and Lady Eldon to look at that sacrosanct window in the lower tier.

The same intellectual pilgrims who honour genius by worshipping at a shrine in Stratford-on-Avon render homage at a little cottage, with a roof of red tiles, that stands alone by the railway running from Wylam to Lemington. In the lower room George Stephenson was born. When we go into the great hall at Euston we can see for ourselves what the magician of locomotives looked like; and when we peep into his first home there will be pointed out to us the corner, not far from the oven, where "Geordie," who became so "keen after the larnin'," opened his eyes on the world. Robert Stephenson, born in 1803, bridged the Menai Strait, and constructed, among other notable spans, the Victoria Bridge at Montreal.

He was educated at Dr. Bruce's Academy, and a tablet in Eldon Place marks the house where the great father and son resided together.

William George Armstrong, afterwards Lord Armstrong, was born in Newcastle in 1810. He was originally intended for the law, and was articled to a firm of solicitors; but realizing the extraordinary inventive faculty he possessed he abandoned the law for congenial work in connexion with hydraulics and ordnance. From the two fields which were purchased in 1847 as the site for the shops which were to make the hydraulic machinery invented by Mr. Armstrong, evolved the Elswick Works which, for a mile and a quarter, stretch along the north bank of the Tyne outside Newcastle.

The character of the great genius was similar to that of other scientists of his town and time. It is curious, but the air of Newcastle appeared to breed in that generation minds that were practical yet original, penetrating yet trustful, and of so lofty and generous a calibre that we go about in these days of chicanery and pretence wondering where and when they are to be matched. My thoughts turn instinctively to a contemporary and friend of Lord Armstrong, Joseph Dickinson, my grandfather, who was born in 1818. He, like his friend Robert Stephenson, was educated at Dr. Bruce's school, and his fame was world-wide as far as matters appertaining to geology and mining go. He was the first Inspector of Mines appointed—in

1850—and a record of his forty odd years of service would be a report of the enormous improvements in the mining industry in the United Kingdom. So great was his fame as an expert that at one time in addition to his duties in his own vast district he was called upon to advise in every case of mining disaster in any part of the country. In 1887 he was appointed one of the Commissioners to inquire into important questions relating to the coal industry. Mr. Dickinson's record is the most prominent in the annals of the science of mining, and for generations those who turn to the chronicles of the past will see foremost among all the name of the Tynesider who was the beginning of mine inspection, and who formulated the basic laws which govern the safe working of all mines at the present time.

In the Hancock Museum of Natural History may be seen the matchless collection of birds set up by the Tyneside naturalist, John Hancock. They are regarded by most experts as the finest specimens of bird-taxidermy in the world, and I don't see that the contention will ever be disproved. The same fine gallery contains many original drawings by Thomas Bewick, born in 1753, world-famous and *facile princeps* amongst drawers and engravers upon wood. He went, as he himself told us, to nature for his patterns, and became the Robert Burns of the pencil. As has been pointed out Bewick's real place in relation to wood engraving stands in a similar

position in reference to it as Hans Membling and the Van Eycks stand in relation to oil painting in the Low Countries. "His not only were the drawings to be engraved, but he restored, or rather re-created, the art of engraving the drawing on wood, and invented the instruments with which he worked as well as the methods of his working."

Thomas Miles Richardson was born in Newcastle in 1784. He was first a cabinet-maker, and lastly devoted himself to landscape painting as enthusiastically as his fellow-countryman "Capability" Browne dedicated himself to landscape gardening. John Martin, born in 1787 at Hexham, served his time as a heraldic painter in Newcastle. He painted those weird masterpieces "The Plains of Heaven" and "The Great Day of His Wrath," which were said to represent the rolling ridges below Hexham, although Newburn, now a riot of industrialism, is a claimant for the honour. Martin died in the Isle of Man, at Harold's Tower, and the fame of his gigantic canvas was such that the Manx people began to feel more than a conviction that the scene the artist had in mind when he perpetrated "The Plains of Heaven" was really and in very truth the fine hills behind Douglas.

Of all Northumbrian worthies Cuthbert Collingwood is the greatest. He was born in 1750 in a high, square, brick house at the head of the crooked lane, once the principal entrance to the town of

Newcastle, known as the Side, and his father followed the picturesquely named occupation of a merchant-adventurer. He was educated at the Royal Grammar School, an establishment as famous as that of Dr. Bruce, by the Rev. Hugh Moises, who is commemorated in St. Nicholas's by a fine monument by Flaxman. To this Admiral Collingwood subscribed, and we find him writing to his Northumbrian father-in-law, Mr. J. E. Blackett, and sending a donation of twenty pounds "for the monument of my worthy master Mr. Moises."

Northumberland's hero died at sea in 1810, and is buried with his friend and comrade, Nelson, in the Valhalla of all heroes, St. Paul's, but in St. Nicholas's, the church where Collingwood was baptized, and where he worshipped as a little boy, there is a fitting monument surmounted by three laurel wreaths encircling the never-to-be-forgotton "1st June," "St. Vincent," "Trafalgar."

Collingwood's despatch giving the official account of the Battle of Trafalgar in its clearness and modesty enshrines the noble chivalry of the writer for all time. I have spoken elsewhere of Lord Collingwood's letters. One would seek far before one found any comparable. And the Admiral was as romantic a lover as his schoolmate, Lord Eldon—the exquisite letters to his wife reveal his tenderness. Sailors make far more successful husbands than do soldiers—cynics tell us that the reason for it lies

in the fact that seamen are rarely at home, and custom cannot stale what must always appear to them an infinite variety. Nothing could be more charming than Collingwood's letter to a friend describing a meeting with his wife after two years of cruising. He was at Plymouth, refitting, and unable to go north. Mrs. Collingwood was on her way down from Northumberland—an adventurous journey in those days — when her husband was ordered to sea. As he was presiding at a Court Martial he could not leave port until the morning, and that evening, as he was dining with Nelson, word reached him that his wife was in Plymouth. "I flew to the inn where I had desired my wife to come, and found her and little Sarah as well after their journey as if it had lasted only for the day. No greater happiness is human nature capable of than was mine that evening; but at dawn we parted and I went to sea. How surprised you would have been to have popped into the Fountain Inn and seen Lord Nelson, my wife, and myself, sitting by the fire-side eating, and little Sarah teaching Phillis, her dog, to dance."

The only other hero to be bracketed with Collingwood is a worthy of an earlier day, Nicholas Ridley, who was born in the old pele-tower of Willimoteswick about the beginning of the sixteenth century. The Ridley family is still famous in Northumberland, but the site of the martyr's birthplace is now occupied

by a farmhouse, and there are only fragmentary remains of the ancient pele.

Ridley was Bishop of London in the brief reign of Edward the Sixth, the fervent young Protestant, whose early death was so great a blow to Reformers. Lady Jane Grey found a keen supporter in Ridley, but the people wanted Mary, and on July 19, 1553 —Edward died on the 6th—Mary ascended the throne, and Bishop Ridley, with three others, was exempt from the pardon which she granted to all other Reformers, and was taken to the Tower of London. The proceedings of the ecclesiastical commissioners who tried the three so-called heretics is history. Ridley, Latimer, and Cranmer were condemned to death at the stake. When all means of writing were denied, Ridley cut the lead of his prison-window into a pencil and wrote to relations and friends on the margins of such books as he was allowed to retain. His thoughts went back to the home of his childhood, and his words, written in the shadow of death, provide a wonderful sidelight on the life of the Border as it was then lived:

"In Tynedale, where I was born, not far from the Scottish borders, I have known my countrymen watch night and day in their harness, such as they had, that is, in their jacks, and their spears in their hands (you call them northern gads), especially when they had any privy warning of the coming of the

Scots. And so doing, although at every such bickerings some of them spent their lives, yet by such means like pretty men they defended their country."

"Master Hugh Latimer and Master Doctor Ridley, pretended bishops of Worcester and London," as Mary's Cardinal styled them, were persuaded in all manner of ways to return to the Church of Rome, but they would none of it. Ridley walked to the stake that October morning in 1555 dressed in his robes, and when Latimer joined him he said: "Be of good cheer, brother, for God will either assuage the fury of the flames or else strengthen us to abide it." Latimer's rejoinder as he stood with an iron chain around his waist which tied him to the burning pyre, is immortal: "Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man. We shall this day light such a candle by God's grace in England as I trust shall never be put out."

Many great men have been mayors of Newcastle, dating from that Dick Whittington of the fourteenth century, Roger Thornton, who crept through the West Gate a poor lad from the country, and by his own efforts became the richest of merchant-princes. He was eight times mayor and represented his town in several Parliaments. However important he was, he never forgot his road to success, and we read in old annals that when the mighty West Gate showed signs of wear and tear Roger Thornton rebuttressed

and re-edified it. Thornton, who died in 1411—by Royal Charter Newcastle was created a town and county in 1400—founded the old Guildhall on the Sandhill. The magnificent brass of his tomb in All Saints' Church is still regarded as a priceless medieval relic.

George Carr was mayor ten times between the years 1481 and 1503, and is buried in St. Nicholas's beneath what was once, before its mutilation by the Scots, a canopied altar-tomb. Carr received in considerable pomp the daughter of Henry the Seventh as she went to Lamberton to marry James the Fourth of Scotland.

A Mark Shafto (or Shaftan as the slogan has it) was mayor in 1548, and if you are good at deciphering almost illegible runes you can trace upon a flat stone lying in St. Nicholas's the words: "Jesu have mercy on ye soule of Mark."

Sir Lionel Maddison, mayor in 1632, was knighted by Charles the First. He also has a monument in St. Nicholas's, with a row of little Maddisons kneeling across it in a reverent line.

Then we come to Sir John Marley, who made history during the siege of Newcastle in 1644. He it was who effected the saving of the lantern-tower of the Cathedral by means of an adroit reprisal, and under his skilful generalship a portion of the castle held out for a considerable time after the walls and the city were carried.

Members of the old Northumbrian family of Ridley have been mayors of Newcastle times and again, going back to Nicholas, who may be said to have founded the fortunes of the family. A Matthew Ridley was mayor during the Jacobite rising of 1745, and prepared the defence of the town against the forces of the Young Pretender. A second Matthew Ridley, who died in 1813, was three times mayor of his town and eight times Member of Parliament.

Side by side with Dick-Whittington-Roger-Thornton who might be styled the founder of old Newcastle, should stand, though divided by centuries, Citizen Richard Grainger, the builder of the modern Newcastle, whose work is aptly described upon the wall-tablet erected to his memory in the ancient church of St. John's: "A Citizen of Newcastle does not need to be reminded of the genius of Richard Grainger, and a stranger is referred to the principal streets of the city, forming the most splendid and enduring monument to that genius. He died 4th of July, 1861."

And as I pass out of the old church, around which my forbears lie, I am in danger of forgetting a worthy worthy—John Cunningham, who died in 1773. Says the eulogy on his tombstone: "Here lie the remains of John Cunningham. Of his excellence as a Pastoral Poet his works will remain a monument for ages after this temporary Tribute of Esteem is in dust forgotten."

My limitations, alas! are reached long before I come to the end of my worthies. I leave so many great ones unrecorded. . . .

Unnumber'd sparks
And every one doth shine.

CHAPTER IX

A SWALLOW-GLIDE

The way that I was going.
Macbeth.

Speak thou, Northumberland.
Henry VI.

WHAT the chars-à-banc advertise as "a circular tour" comes into our colour scheme. We must visit some old churches, historical castles, and ancient ruins, regretting as we go that we cannot hope to enfilade them all, and that so cursory a glimpse will never rank as a view-point of value. Just here I was brought up by the criticism of the American, who, uninvited, was overlooking this manuscript. 'Say," said he positively, "it ain't no sorter use tellin' folks that! Guess we did a swallow-glide through Northumberland."

The definition I wanted! A swallow-glide! Commenced from Healey, or Temple Healey, where my kinsman, Mr. W. B. Dickinson, has lived these many years. Although not specifically mentioned in the *Testa de Nevill* as a member of the barony

of Baliol, it is in every way probable that Healey was given to the Knights Templars by one of the lords of that munificent house. On the suppression of the Order of Templars, in 1308, their lands at Healey, Corbridge, and elsewhere were taken into the King's hands, and seem to have been, shortly afterwards, granted to the Knights Hospitallers, who retained possession until the general suppression of religious houses, when they were resumed by the Crown. The present house Healey is built partly on the foundations of the pele-tower, of which portions yet remain, including a room where ill-fated Derwentwater—Dilston and Healey are close neighbours—often supped. In the reconstruction of the house, the lintel of the old one, known to have been there, which bore the sign of the Knights Templars, was broken, lost, or built in again, upside down probably, as was the way with the vandal-builders of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The woods of Healey are celebrated. They remind me of Soignies — Soignies, alas! "before the War." There are tunnels of the dark trees that look unending, aisles of ash and beech and fir with the bracken growing dense between, sombre even at midday, and in the undergrowth is the stirring of wild game, the stealthy movements of a fox, the white flash of rabbits, and the sound of the wings of startled birds. Healey might be called a Northumberland forest throwing its shadow

over corn-fields and cattle-pastures. I am warned that I am not to classify my kinsman as a farmer. Farming in Northumberland is, he tells me, a serious business, in which no mere dilettante may engage. I may say, however, since "himself" is not present to stop me, that interest at Healey is much intrigued by the peculiarly representative breed of cattle known thereabouts as "blue-greys." A blue-grey is a cross between a Galloway cow and a white shorthorn bull that comes of a pure white strain. The result is a fine stocky animal of use only as meat. The calves, wild, handsome little creatures, never leave the cows, and all live out through the winters and thrive and fatten upon what would be to most cattle starvation diet.

At the junction of the Devil's Water and the Tyne above a beautiful gorge we came on Dilston. The American says we "luckied" on it, and he may be right. The expression is one of those aptnesses invented now and again by his countrymen. And our maps were very bad!

The present-day appearance of the romantic home of the Earl of Derwentwater, whose name is indelibly connected with the first Stuart rising, would lead the average person to imagine that the deterioration of Dilston was far advanced when other Northumbrian fortresses were at the foundation stone era. The portion of the castle which you see to-day ruined and wild and roofless, was enlarged in the reign of

CORSTOPITUM, CORBRIDGE.

James the First, and embattled against the inroads of the Scots. Of the remainder of the once glorious and tradition-steeped home of the Radclyffes nothing remains but moss-grown fragments buried beneath a pall of leaves. A curious sanctity rests on the place; the breath of an earlier time, of a mournful happiness, seems to lie on the woods that sheltered "the bonny earl," and echoed to the hoof-beats of his horse as he clattered under the old archway and rode off to join Errington of Beaufront, and so to Greenrigg, in Redesdale, where the Jacobites of the county declared open war upon George the First.

The romance of the Earl of Derwentwater—and it is a romance stranger than fiction—has been told so often and told so well it will not be necessary to attempt a close repetition. As is generally known the Earl was only twenty-six years of age when he was taken at Preston on the surrender of the Jacobite force, with his brother Charles, and Forster of Bamburgh, who arranged the unpopular capitulation, Lords Nithsdale, Carnwath, Nairn, Widdrington, and Kenmure. The prisoners of war were sent to London, into which city the gallant gentlemen rode two and two with pinioned arms, and a soldier, with fixed bayonet, leading each horse. Of all those condemned, Derwentwater and Kenmure alone suffered death. Forster escaped, as all lovers of romantic stories know, by the aid of his sister

Dorothy, and Nithsdale by the courage of his wife.

Derwentwater was attainted and his vast estates were confiscated and allotted to Greenwich Hospital, from which beneficiaries the present owner, Lord Allendale, purchased Dilston. From the time of the Earl's execution on Tower Hill in 1716, the castle stood abandoned to the winds and the depredations of local builders.

Many of us recollect the claim—what a "stunt" it would have made for the popular newspaper of to-day!—to the Derwentwater estates put forward by an eccentric lady who was supported by a large and pecuniarily helpful following. The legal opinion expressed at the time was to the effect that if the line of the Derwentwater Radclyffes exists it runs in the direction of Radclyffe of Hyde and Foxdenton, whose present head is Major C. E. Radclyffe, the well-known sportsman and hunter of big game. Pen-wielder, too, as the chapters he contributed to my book *Two Dianas in Alaska* disclose.

As regards the varying spelling of the name Radclyffe and Radcliffe, *i* and *y* in Saxon were the same thing. Major Radclyffe tells me he possesses examples of signatures of Radcliffes, including Derwentwater's, which show that the same man would use an *i* or a *y* in writing his name, just as the fancy took him.

The smiling custodian of Dilston handed us the

keys. "This opens the Chapel — it's a Roman Catholic place, you'll know that." She spoke as one who advised caution.

A dreary barn-like place, the intact little chapel, which by some feat of legerdemain, for it is extraordinarily bare and crude, retains an air of mystery and remoteness. Beneath the flooring the headless body of Derwentwater rested for a century of time. It was first buried by his friends at St. Giles-in-the-Fields, since the authorities, knowing the wrath of the Earl's supporters in Northumberland, forbade the removal of the body to Dilston lest the result should be a general rising among his people. The old ballad runs:

> Albeit that here in London town
> It is my fate to die,
> O carry me to Northumberland,
> In my father's grave to lie.

By some means or another the Earl's friends brought the body home, and it remained at Dilston until the exhumation in 1805, when it was reinterred at Thorndon, in Essex. We have it on record that the dissevered head was found in the crook of the right arm with the axe-marks visible.

Crossing the leaf-strewn grass we unlocked the door in the massive red-sandstone keep and stood within. The wind whistled drearily down doorless passages and blew scurries of dried leaves about our feet. The worn stone stairs, down which

Derwentwater passed for the last time, led to a great room open to the sky. Beard moss hung across the mullioned windows, weeds grew in every interstice, and across fireplaces of exquisite stonework the spiders had laced their webs in skeins of silver. A fragmentary embrasure gave sanctuary to the owls, and beneath a rough-hewn Cyclopean flag a deep, dark pit yawned mysterious and weird—Valhalla, perhaps, for the soul of slain Derwentwater.

"Write this for a memorial in a book," said the American, quoting the Scriptures with an aptness of which I had thought him incapable.

And indeed the idea was nowise ill-chosen, for Dilston has this awe about it—the past is close held and moves the living to a curious sense that this place of dreams is charged with a nameless unexplainable mysticism, for the old castle itself has beheld so much perish around it and yet it has kept so firm a hold upon tradition, that those who wander there grow, as it were, bewildered, and know not which is of to-day and which of bygone times.

We descended into the misty gloom which filled the basement as water fills a pot, and at the foot of the stairs the American paused and said with decision: "This home kinder brings a lump in my throat, and I ain't sure I like lumps. Guess we'll git back to the automobile."

I crept through the trees to the margin of the

CORBRIDGE-ON-TYNE.

frothing streams which were said to run red on the night of Derwentwater's execution, away from the place where everything lies stricken. It would be for ever empty and alone, standing forlorn in mockery of a lost cause and a day long dead.

And with the memory of Derwentwater and his followers still insistent we crossed the old stone bridge over which the Jacobites rode through Corbridge that October day. A bridge of history, dated 1674, and renowned, among other credits, for being the only one on the Tyne which stood up against the flood of 1771. The Romans, who created Corbridge, exercised here their capacity for bridge-making, and up to recent times parts of the Roman structure appeared in dry seasons. It carried the Watling Street to Corstopitum, or Corchester, which lies a little to the west of Corbridge. Very many treasures have been found there and added to one collection or another, the most important being the renowned silver dish, known as the Corbridge Lanx, a fine relic, weighing some hundred and fifty ounces, which was washed down by the Tyne from Corstopitum and found by a child in 1734. I have never seen it because when I was at Alnwick last autumn, where the Duke of Northumberland preserves the dish, it was not yet unpacked after a visit for exhibition purposes to Rome, a prolonged one owing to the War intervening.

St. Wilfred built a monastery at Corbridge, and later again it was blessed, or cursed, according to one whimsical chronicler, with four churches, of which one survives on the site of Wilfred's monastic house. It is a grand specimen of Saxon architecture, carried out on the economical system of utilizing Roman materials from Corstopitum. Visitors who prefer ecclesiastical relics to all others will find a great deal to arrest their attention in this church of St. Andrew which, like many others in Northumberland, was "put through it" times and again by the Scots. Many of the old stones are blackened as "having pass'd the fire." For myself I found surpassing interest in the old register and the signature of the Earl of Derwentwater, Churchwarden. In the churchyard stands an old pele-tower, excellently preserved. Here the padre lived safe and sound, sheltering his parishioners when the Scots came over the Border, or the wild men of the North Tyne and Rede descended like wolves on the fold.

Time and again through the ages Corbridge suffered all manner of atrocities in which those heroes of our childhood's day, Wallace and Bruce, outdid the worst of them. It is an attractive village to-day, and the sky when we were there was magically clear. Little details of hill-sides miles away came out as if within a stone's throw. The luxuriant gardens facing the river, with

MITFORD.

masses of green creepers turning red and gold on the grey walls, had a delusive appearance of midsummer.

We had lunch at "The Golden Lion," which is constructed, like other houses in Corbridge, of stones and masonry filched from deserted Dilston. And here for a while the owner of my swallow-glider temporarily forgot all about prohibition.

Looking back, from the uplands above—I ought to say "bank," for what is a hill in the south becomes a bank in the north—I saw Corbridge in summer with the soft grey of its houses covered with clinging green and glowing creepers reflected in the gliding surface of the eternal Tyne. Then—a moment, and the mirage was gone!

Stagshaw Bank — the Staneshiebank of Dandy Dinmont—was clearing up the wreckage made by the Fair which, famous as that of Barnet, is, so the old folk say, not the picturesque and lawless frolic it was.

More than once I impressed upon Fleming that there was no need for hurry, and the American added his entreaties to mine. But I believe that our chauffeur did not know he was going over the ground as fast as if a speed limit still existed. Village after village flashed by, and now is the moment, I think, to say something of the hedging of Northumberland, which is distinctive as the massive sod fences overgrown with flowers of the

Isle of Man. The "grim walls" we hear so much about are peculiar to the wilder sections of the county, on the Highlands, and by the sea-coast. For the rest there are upstanding fences of hawthorn and blackthorn—old trees, as one may tell from the girth of their bared roots and poles. The majority of the roads, adjacent to the sea often, and within hail of moor country, are sentinelled by grand forest trees—I saw as fine avenues in Northumberland as I have come upon in any land. The ash, the beech, and the sycamore thrive as nowhere else. Harking back in my remembrance, the long, gracefully lined roads around Ford and Callaly have a way of painting themselves into my recollection with some indelible pigment. They say — the all-knowing mysterious "they" — that autumn in the north has nothing of the radiance that rainbows the southern counties. It is a heresy. The woods and the tints of the autumn leaves in Northumberland outshine all others. There is, too, the music of old history thrilling through them, and they are changed in nothing. Who travels along these roads to-day may go back five hundred years. Through the silver boles of the trees it would still seem but natural to see a Clavering accoutred in new armour made by the wizard-worker in Hawick, or the Percy—"What for the richness of his cote, being of goldsmiths work, garnished with pearls and stones . . . he was

MORPETH.

esteemed, both of the Scots and Englishmen more like a prince than a subject." The deepest charm of these old forests is, after all, that in them time stands still.

But—a big But—I was taking you along a good road, if slowly, to Stamfordham, a name you pronounce by treating the "Stam" like a swear-word, and the "ford" as something unmentionable. I recognized Stamfordham at once although I had never seen it before. "Jackanapes" and "Tony" played upon the Green, and when I saw the postman and the grey goose I knew I had made no mistake. There is just such a village cross as a village sacred to Jackanapes would possess, and a free-school, endowed by a knight of olden time.

We swung on over many brawling burns and passed scenes marked on our map "Roman Camp," and at every one of these we flung ourselves out of the car, to find more often than not that the enthusiastic map-maker was prone to log (naval verb) such without informing the local inhabitants of the fact. It must be owned that Fleming pinned his faith to an American publication anglicized out of all likeness to Northumberland, and in it we found the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen. But after passing Belsay Castle, where the Middletons have been seated for six hundred years, we did find to the eastward of Whalton village a remarkable camp,

from which, Hodgson says, the name Whalton, or Walton, originated.

We came to a brief halt at Mitford, a really lovely village, which at the Conquest era was lorded over by a Mitford whose only daughter, Sibel, married a Norman invader, one Richard Bertram. Since that long gone day the castle has passed into, and through, many hands. Queen Mary, and afterwards Charles the Second, restored it to the ancient family. The present lord of the manor, Captain Osbaldeston-Mitford, has his seat near the fine ruins and walls of the old castle which stand high on the southern bank of the Wansbeck, the only beck in the county. The church here is of considerable antiquity, and there is to be seen in it a crude stone effigy of a Bertram, dated 1622.

Morpeth is supposed to derive its name from some moor path, and Leland calls it "a long town, metely well buylded, with low howsys, the stretes pavyed. It is a far fayrar towne than Alenwike. Morpeth Castle standeth by Morpeth towne. It is set on a high hill, and about the hill is moche wood."

Of Morpeth Castle, built soon after the Conquest, nothing remains but the gateway-tower and fragmentary bits of the outer walls. It was held by the Scots in 1644 against a large Royalist force under Montrose, and after the battering it received went to pieces for lack of repair.

There are many interesting sides to Morpeth, to

say nothing of the enchanting appearance of the place from the banks of the Wansbeck. Of all the reminders of ancient days none fascinated the American more than the ringing of the Curfew Bell at eight o'clock of an evening. He liked the "cute" sound of it so much that he proposed remaining in Morpeth another night for the sheer pleasure he took in the old-world business, but I was for moving on, Curfew or no Curfew. I had no desire to lie awake for another few hours on a mattress into which had been gathered fragments of the castle's masonry.

There are few inns in Northumberland—that is, to call an inn, though there are dozens which call themselves hotels, and perhaps I was looking for something that no longer exists save in a curious artificial sort of way. One can find inns in France still, but in England — no. We appear to have nothing between the blatancies of country hotels with their — as my hostess of a night described them — effervescing lights (Northumberland folk have a talent for nomenclature), and the roadside inns where transient visitors are the last people catered for.

Four miles east of Morpeth we ran through Pegswood, a colliery village bearing the signs and marks of industrialism as lightly as any mining centre known to me. The little gardens were gay with vivid chrysanthemums. Almost at once we were in the country again. Flattish rather, not

unlike Leicestershire, and, until we came to wooded Bothal, comparatively treeless.

The sound of our Klaxon under the old archway at Bothal seemed an anachronism in the beautiful, shadowy, ancient place—not thus does one signal a pile so antiquated. The Castle stands royally on a hill set in a deep valley, and backing the green turf enclosed by fine and shattered outer walls which face the great entrance. Picturesque woods slope to the Wansbeck, which is hereabouts at its most beautiful. The Castle is interesting by reason of the fact that it is habitable, comfortably habitable, and yet as it was in olden days. The striking feat of restoration without renovation has been achieved by Mrs. William Sample, who was her own architect. Bothal, thanks to Mrs. Sample's artistic flair, must delight the ghosts of the old builders who put so much heart into their masterpieces. She has succeeded where numbers of skilled architects have failed. More than one of the restored castles of Northumberland, with their magnificent oak carvings and rich parquet flooring, resemble nothing so much as a costly pseudo-antique town hall in some wealthy provincial city.

We went from dungeon to roof, and there I gave greeting to the two stone gentlemen who have stood on the battlements, the remnants of an army, so long and so boldly in purposeful attitudes, close together through the centuries. It was fondly hoped that

BOTHAL CASTLE, ON THE WANDSBECK.

these effigies, common to so many Border castles, would persuade an enemy into the belief that the garrison was much larger than it was, and that they were a very alert and tireless body of troops.

The music of the old greatness echoes at every step. Every tower, every turret, every angle, has some story of the past present in it and every arch is a chronicle. Bothal in all its long history has never changed hands for money. There are no deeds of ownership, and the castle and manors have always passed from one to another by marriage. The present owner of this lovely spot is the Duke of Portland.

On the hither side of Widdrington we glimpsed the sea, and from near all that remains of the once noble castle of Widdrington we had a grand view seawards and southward over the land to distant Tynemouth Castle. From the flat land around Widdrington, Warkworth comes into your vision unobtrusively, and then, standing for what it is, blares its grandeur at you. A forest of masts arose from the minute port of Amble at the mouth of the Coquet, an important little place in its way, with staithes connected by rail with many important collieries, and a coal shipment that increases year by year.

A shaft of sunlight struck the white lighthouse on Coquet Island, a mile or so from the shore. It is a place to visit if you have time to spare and

feel like crossing a jobbly bit of water. There are fragmentary remains of the Saxon monastery to be seen, and a little cell that has been occupied by one hermit after another. Coquet Island was much in favour with hermits. I have only once met a hermit in the open, so to speak, and that was on a tiny islet of the Semidi group in Alaska. From him I gleaned something of the domestic economy of hermits. He made it quite clear that an island is a *sine qua non.* Without an island a hermit is only play-acting the business, and nobody should take him seriously.

WARKWORTH CASTLE

CHAPTER X

ALONG THE COAST

This worm-eaten hold of ragged stone.
Henry IV.

A GRAND, gaunt wilderness of stone, this immortal Warkworth, so vast it could conceal an army, and oft-times did. When I saw it last autumn repair work which would arrest decay was in progress, but no attempt at what architects call "restoration" was being made. The Castle had that day been handed over to the people of this country by the Duke of Northumberland.

"The worm-eaten hold" goes back to the eighth century, and its record was drum and trumpet, capture and victory, through the tenure of Fitz-Richards and Fitz-Rogers and Claverings to the time of Edward the Third, who bestowed Warkworth, with its baronies and wide manors, on his "well-beloved kinsman" Henry de Percy, who, in return, promised to pay fifty marks yearly to the King, and serve him with men and arms as long as he should live.

The history of the House of Percy has been copiously

written of. Since the days of Shakespeare, who cloaked Hotspur with unfading romance, how many chroniclers have sharpened their pencils on the ancient and ever-new theme of this great family whose traditions are inextricably bound up with those of Northumberland? I am happy to think, being quite incapable of doing justice to the subject, that in a slight record such as the text of a colour book is bound to be, it is not needful to attempt to introduce each individual member, one as notable historically as the other.

The story of Warkworth is for most of us—Hotspur. Through the postern gate leading down into what is now the main street of the town, he passed many and many a time, and for the last time to the fatal field of Shrewsbury. From the same gateway issued Henry Percy, the first Earl of Northumberland, burning to avenge his son's death. A formidable venture which met with disaster, and the Earl surrendered at York. Rising to power and place again, the Earl was next besieged by Bolinbroke in person, and though well held, Warkworth Castle was forced to capitulate by Bolinbroke's artillery, used for the first time in England with any effect other than on the gunners. For a short space of time the castle was in the possession of Bolinbroke, but eventually Henry the Fifth, himself a figure of romance, restored the place to Hotspur's son. In the Wars of the Roses, which drove one castle after another down the road to ruin, Warkworth changed

hands backwards and forwards. The Percys stood for Lancaster, but their stronghold was seized by the Yorkists, and Warwick, "the King-maker," was there for a period, and from thence took energetic action against the fortresses of Alnwick, Dunstanburgh, and Bamburgh.

The huge keep, practically the only remaining portion of the castle which is outwardly entirely intact, dates, it is conjectured, from Edward the Third's reign, and the interior, a maze of ruinous holds, vast kitchens, and vaulted cellars, into which the cattle were driven when a Border raid was afoot, is magnificent in its sombre decay. No ruined castle in Northumberland has so imposing a keep, adorned as it is by lofty towers and a rectangular lantern-tower rising above the rest. Key-hunting was easy here. The guardian of the stately pile lives in the ancient barbican and gateway, deep within cave-like stone chambers, strong as a lighthouse.

There were starlings strutting along the broken edge of the half-ruined Lion Tower, so called from the bas-relief of the Percy lion on the grey frontage, and within the turf-clad courtyard a white pony fed around the remains of a chapel surmounted by a bell-turret known as Cradyfargus, the why and the wherefore nobody can explain. The romantic walls that stood against successions of Scottish attacks are fairly solid to-day. Warkworth is a well-preserved ruin; its decay is not decadence, and as it stands, so,

with care, it should remain. Passing through the postern tower, you catch a glimpse of a Jack-the-Giant-Killer kitchen, which still shows a primitive cuisine. A last look at the green behind us, whereon a mass of stone relics—arches, pillars, corbels—lie scattered within the shell of the frowning relic of feudal and Border glory, and so down the steep banks to the Coquet, which the brown and orange bracken all but hid. Above the stream glittered a still deeper gold, and the filmy smoke of the key-keeper's bastion-home floated away over the towers.

Our pilgrimage to the cavernous sanctuary sacred to the Hermit of Warkworth, a journey no tripper fails to take, was by way of the river, all too short an excursion, for the shallow, clear, and swiftly running water-way was rarely lovely, and rowing against its stream an experience I would not have missed.

The rivers of Northumberland are in no way characteristic of the dour, canny, and reserved people. Nowhere else, save in the Isle of Man—and there our rivers are but rivulets—flow such merry, tossing, lightsome, plunging burns. Said a northern verse-maker: "You don't dream you can match them south of this?" You don't, because you cannot. It may be because of its ardent fishermen and their tales that the Coquet is acclaimed above all rivers in the county. It is a charming stream, and rises amongst the wildest parts of the Cheviots, and in its windings

carries on its banks scenes and buildings of high renown. But is it any better than the Wansbeck, for instance? Why, ask strangers, is the Coquet in the position in which Northumbrian admiration places it? It is, I think, because it never sinks into insignificance, never varies its life and movement. It seems to carry its volume along in a great stride, as the fairy-tales would say. "Over stock and stone, till one's hair whistles in the wind!" Obstacles may be there, both in the rocky bed and on the tree-tangled shore, but the spirit of the stream is greater than them.

The Hermitage, a most curious bit of medieval architecture, is fashioned out of the rock. There is a tiny chapel, with an altar, and you reach it by way of steps cut into the face of a reddish cliff, picturesquely ivied. Beneath a rounded arch-doorway you pass into the first of the caves, which has a fine vaulted roof supported by columns hewn, not built up, out of the solid rock. Near a small altar is a crudely sculptured, recumbent figure, supposedly the Isabel Widdrington for love of whom the equally crudely produced-in-stone Hermit Bertram took to the recluse business on this cliff face, without any of the usual appanages of hermits, islands, talkative sea-birds, and the rest. The stone hermit is watching over the stone lady, and he rests his head on a worn hand. His expression, when there was one, was sad and mournful, and indeed, these quaint images lying in the dark, cold

chapel-cave, with the song of the river chanting an everlasting requiem, form a haunting silhouette which recurs to the mind again and again, called up who shall say how or why.

An inner retreat-chapel is rugged and rough-hewn, and obtains light from the outer cave by a carven window. Here is an age-old altar seat—an interesting example of primitive stone-work. From this room runs a third chamber with a wide mouth-opening giving on to the river trailing like a silver thread between the trees below. We tried hard to decipher the markings on a time-scarred shield embossed above the doorway of the inner chapel, and after much argument decided that they stood for a crown and a spear, and—perhaps—a cross. Above the door-arch of the outer chapel is an inscription in Latin: "My tears have been my meat day and night!"

A hermit who hermits for love and not for purposes of religious observances is always an object of interest, and this mysterious sanctuary in the cliff at Warkworth, held as it has been in reverence by generations of Percys, is a relic incomparable. He was more than something of a builder, this poor knight of olden time, for his haunt above the Coquet was hewn by his own hands. And here, for your consideration and sympathy, is his pathetic story.

Isabel Widdrington, whose ruinous home we passed but an hour or so ago, was loved by a Bertram of Bothal Castle, and after the bloodthirsty way of

young ladies in the age of chivalry, Isabel dared her suitor to an outstanding doughty deed, something with human gore in it. Bertram could think of nothing more original than a raid over the Border, and in the foray the love-lorn youth came off badly. His friends dragged him so far as Wark Castle on the Tweed, to which Isabel, learning of the disaster, set out from Widdrington. She had not ridden far when a Scottish warrior, prowling about the countryside after the way of his kind, looting and stealing, met the beautiful girl, and straightway carried her off to his fastness in the Highlands. As soon as Bertram's hurts allowed him to travel he turned north, and in another direction, since the rescue parties were not sure of the location of Isabel's prison-house, went Bertram's young brother. The abductor's castle was found at long last, and Bertram, drawing near with all secrecy and design, saw his ladye descending from a turret-window by means of a rope-ladder held at the bottom by a kilted stalwart. This was too much. Isabel found was Isabel lost! With a yell of fury our hero drew his sword and fell upon his supposed rival. The girl threw herself in front of the Highlander and received a mortal wound. As you have already guessed, the youth masquerading in the kilts was Bertram's young brother, who, in his efforts to save the lady, had disguised himself in the costume of the country. After this, there was nothing in the wide world for the distraught murderer to do but

hermit, and there we leave him, a sermon in stone, worshipping, in what I am sure he intended should typify an attitude of grief and remorse, at the feet of poor Isabel, whom he had loved and slain.

Inland now, to Alnwick, feudal in aspect still, rather sombre, a little hard, and very grey. Running through what would be called in less august regions suburbs of "the town of stone," we passed a fine column, a memorial raised a century agone to the Duke of Northumberland of that day, and, as was fitting, the Percy lion burgeoned with pride at the base. I, who know something of lions, can vouch for it that this lion of the Percys, met all over Alnwick, is as much like the wild beast as it is possible for a creature of heraldry to be. Londoners know the lion well. Northumberland House, at Finsbury Park, has an archway-door over which the purposeful beast stands guard, and at Syon House, near Isleworth, the lion is a landmark seen for miles around.

Mr. W. H. Longstaffe, the historian, held that the numerous lions found in the arms of Northumberland families long before the introduction of the Percys to the county, as well as in those ascribed to the princes of Scotland and earls of Northumberland, lead to the supposition of the "Whyte Lyon" being attached to the earldom rather than the family. "Thus it was," said Mr. Longstaffe, "that John Dudley took it up during his short ownership of the title. The white lion and Percy-like crest of Mowbray

were in all probability derived, through the d'Albinis, from Queen Adelicia of Louvaine, sister to Josceline, husband of Agnes Percy, rather than in any allusion to Mowbray, the far back Earl of Northumberland."

Wandering through the old streets at Alnwick one comes to know the charm of the medieval place with its street names that carry stories. I am only concerned for my artist. How will he fare in Alnwick? It seems to my inartistic sense that in grey Alnwick the castle alone will provide a painter's vision. The dull pageants of these streets of quaint corners may pass him by.

The massive turreted archway, under which we passed, reminds us that this fifteenth-century relic, built by Hotspur's son, represents one of the four gates of the town which was strongly walled and embattled on the restoration of the estates by Henry the Fifth. There are many reminders of the great past in the feudal domain—so numerous they cannot be categoried. The American heard his beloved Curfew once more. Curfews had voices and parables for him of which he vaguely knew the meaning the ancient sound bore to himself, but it was beyond him to express it. My regret was intense that we saw no way of "snaffling" the old bell so that my Yankee of the vivid fancy might take it back with him and set it up in his home-town.

The stout bull-ring set in a large stone in the market-place told of bull-baiting, bear-baiting, man-

baiting. Old and new, living and dying, tradition and scepticism, by some strange influence Alnwick unites and harmonizes these antagonisms. Its centre is the old castle, noblest, or so it seemed to me, of all in Northumberland, a castle of grouped towers that rise in all the fantastic grimness of fourteenth-century fancy overlaid by quaint old-world additions and renovations. A glorious place, picturesque everywhere. A place of the Middle Ages still. On the vast walls stand forty of the two hundred stone figures who once manned the curtain defences—the remnants of an army. In all sorts of attitudes the warriors watch; two are drinking, others—bloodthirsty specimens these—are making ready their knives for the Scots, others lean on their arms, useful still in inanition. "They also serve who only stand and wait." Many of the headless and armless fallen lie in safe corners of the fine museum at Alnwick Castle, where, too, a great collection of Roman remains is gathered.

The castle has a large acreage, and below it the broad and winding river Aln steals by, reflecting the grand shapes of the towers and turrets, the hues of the russet trees, and the dark frontage of embattled walls. Beyond and around lies the ducal park, leagues on leagues of it, on either side of the Aln, and the deep woods, wide plains, and straight shady roads form as lovely an example of park scenery as may be found anywhere in this country. Something of the

rich-hued life of the past still abides therein, and the woods and waters of Alnwick waft the subtle incense of it.

Within the vast demesne two once important religious houses lie within two miles of each other, and both are of considerable archæological interest. Of Alnwick Abbey all that remains is a rarely fine example of a fifteenth-century gateway in which the strong poetic reverence of the builders has symbolized itself in the carving of the arms of the family of de Vesci, who held Alnwick Castle for two hundred years of its history. The stones of the ruined abbey were carted away to build lesser structures after the communistic fashion of medieval times. The gateway tower stands on a level spread of green turf surrounded upon three sides by trees old enough to have sheltered the standing glory that was Alnwick Abbey. In close proximity runs the Aln with a tinkling bell-like sound over the stony river bed, and from the woods beyond sound the ringing calls of cock pheasants and the tap-tap-tapping of woodpeckers.

The monastic fortress of Hulne is a grand old sanctuary shut in by still mightier trees. The massive walls which enclosed the buildings are still, in places, high and intact, and wherever we wandered among chapter-houses and chapel, with its narrow lancet windows, carven figures, and relics in stone, the heroic beauty of this monastery upon the hill was around us. Adjoining the ruinous oratories and

offices is a tower saved from dilapidation, and dignified by an inscription as redolent of old-world fragrance as any of the curious messages we came upon, and they were many. It is cut in relief, in the Old English style of lettering, and is, therefore, hard to read :

KX

In the year of Crist Jhu m.cccciii&viii [supposedly 1468—about the time the estreated Percy estates and earldom were restored]
This towr was bilded by Sir Hen. Percy
The fourth erle of Northuberlad of gret honr & worth
That espoused Maud Ye good lady full of virtue & beauty
Daughter to Sir William Herbert, right noble and hardy
Erle of Pembroch whose soules god save
And with his grace coserve ye builder of this towr.

The lifelike stone figure of a Carmelite friar knelt on the grass that once felt his footsteps. His order once held this abbey, walked in it, and thought nothing better could be needed for a background to prayer. They said it reminded them of Mount Carmel. William de Vesci (the name Vasey so usual in south-east Northumberland is a corruption of the high-sounding surname), who went crusading in the reign of Henry the Third, visited Mount Carmel, and in the monastery there found one Ralph Fresben of Northumberland, an ex-crusader, who was persuaded by de Vesci to return with him to his own land on the promise that a monastery should be founded in Alnwick Park as like to Mount Carmel as could be managed. By the present-day

look of the abbey one would not judge that the Christians of Scotland proved better neighbours than the Saracen infidels of the Holy Land.

"I must go back to the sea again," and pick up the long road to Bamburgh. We followed up the Aln so far as the main-line station of Alnmouth, from whence we had a good view of the picturesque seaside resort that is becoming better known as each summer comes and goes. The older people call the place Alemouth still, but the younger generation knocking at the door with more modern ideas pronounce the word as it is spelt. There are long stretches of sand, excellent for children's games, and a golf-links on grassy uplands. No historical features worth noting are left in Alnmouth, but it once possessed a Norman church built upon the foundations of a Saxon edifice referred to by Bede. The Norman work, becoming dilapidated, went the way of handy building material. In its heyday it attracted the attention of the piratical Paul Jones, who fired a shell weighing sixty-eight pounds at the tower—and missed!

Around Boulmer, an old-time haunt of smugglers, and famous for its armed resistance to the Excise officers, we touched upon fine, wild scenery, and as far as we could see the panorama of basaltic columnar rocks guarded the edge of the coast until they merged into the filmy outline of Dunstanburgh Castle looking out to sea.

Howick Haven stands where the little burn comes down the dene which leads from Howick Hall, a seat of Viscount Grey. The present mansion, a mile or so from the sea, succeeded the pele mentioned by Leland, and is a fine one, about a hundred and thirty years old. Fallodon Hall lies in this district, too. It was brought into the Grey family by marriage, and from the estate the present first Viscount Grey took his title-affix. His first wife was a Widdrington, a descendant of the family from which came the lady immortalized in the life-story of the Warkworth hermit.

Near the fishing hamlet of Craster with its pebbly beach set in a dip of the rocky shore we found a by-path to Dunstanburgh, and, anchoring the car, took the rough way after a peep at Craster Tower hidden in a grove of forest trees standing back from the sea. It is a well-preserved pele built about 1415, and forms the rear portion of the present old residence. William de Craucestr' held Craucestr' in 1272 "by the service of half a knight's fee," and the place has gone from one Craster to another without a break. The present Craster married a Roddam of Roddam, upon whose family, one of the most ancient in Northumberland, the lands of Roddam were bestowed by King Athelstane in the curious grant so much admired for its conciseness and brevity, and on the seal of which, to make the charter binding, Athelstane bit with his hollow tooth.

I King Athelstane
Giffs heir to Paulane
Odam and Rodam
Als gud and als fair
Als evir tha myn ware
And yair to witness Maid my wyff.

And before I forget it—Duns Scotus, the famous fourteenth-century scholastic philosopher, was born hereabouts, supposedly in the old buildings of pele-tower variety known as Dunstan's Tower or Proctor's Stead.

No road of any account leads to Dunstanburgh, but there are tracks running over the grassy dunes fringed by sombre heaps of whinstone which bring you to the vast pile which has been regarded by many artists, of whom Turner was one, as unsurpassed in grandeur by any northern fortress. I think of it as Elsinore. Surely had Shakespeare seen it he must have written Hamlet into these rugged towers piled on black cliffs, and caused the Ghost to walk over the jagged reef holding back the sea. Adequately to describe this wonderful stronghold, which abides—to quote Freeman—"as a Castle should abide in all the majesty of a shattered ruin," is beyond my powers. The forlorn majesty of the lonely place is overwhelming. It overwhelmed Leland—I am in good company!—that quaint and great chronicler who said in his own terse way: "Dunstaneborough is hard on the se shore, it standeth on a high stone rok,

the castle is more than halfe a mile in compace and there hath bene great building on it."

The location of the fortress is wonderfully striking, perched as it is on a high crag easily accessible on the south, defended by gaunt, rocky ravines to the west, and by the sea and sheer precipices on the east. Dunstanburgh is the only castle on the Border not built for defence or defiance against the Scots. That theatrical personage Thomas of Lancaster set about raising it for his own aggrandizement, but he had scarce completed the dungeon-tower or gateway ere "Off with his head!" sounded. 1368 saw John of Gaunt, that judge of greatness, completing the stronghold which stood apart, as it were, from Border troubles, save as a sanctuary. The Yorkist armies besieged the place in 1461, and carried it "on conditions." The Tudor period condemned it to the last tragedy of a feudal castle, and the dismantled fortress became the local quarry where building stone and lead roofing might be obtained for the carting away.

In the rocks below the grey pile of ruins we located the famous Rumble Churn, a wild, mysterious cave into whose hollow depths the waves tumble and roar, creating the titanic moans that the folk of a more credulous age than our own set down to the grim types of water-demons said to inhabit the terrifying retreat. The fine old ballad-chronicle of *Sir Guy the Seeker* describes the Churn thus:

ALNMOUTH.

The spray as it broke appear'd like smoke
From a sea volcano pouring;
And still did it rumble, and grumble, and tumble,
Rioting, raging, roaring.

And you cannot hope for a better or clearer picture of the Rumble Churn.

To the northward sweeps the wide bay of Embleton, half a mile from the village of the name. The barony of Embleton was held in the Middle Ages by Simon de Montfort, and at a later period by Edmund, Earl of Lancaster, who received it from his father, Henry the Third. John of Gaunt obtained the barony by marriage. In due course of events Henry the Sixth became overlord, and from the names of the important holders it is easy to deduce the fact that the barony of Embleton ranked as one of the highly important Northumbrian fiefs.

This sea-coast parish has preserved—a really remarkable feat considering the position of it—a fine and ancient church, and a vicarage built on to a rectangular battlemented pele-tower that withstood many a Scottish attack. The church, dating from 1200, is of high archæological and architectural interest, the tower particularly so with its oddly shapen battlements and crocketed pinnacles. Dr. Mandell Creighton, afterwards Bishop of London, held the living of Embleton for ten years, and his *Life* recorded a few facts of his sojourn in the parish.

The American called Embleton "a homely place," and let me tell you Americans do not use the word in the sense that we do. He intended to say it is a plain, not to say ugly village, and truth compels me to uphold him.

In the centre of the bay lies hidden a link with the past, a rarely strange bond that thrills us with its elusive romance. Only now and again is it seen, and of late years it has become "again" rather than "now." The link is a sea-worn rock which at unusually low tides discloses itself, and on its smooth surface, in indistinct lettering of sixteenth-century character, is the name ANDREA BARTON. We cannot know whether the noted Scottish seaman, or an enemy, or an admirer, chiselled the name in the bay which often saw the *Lion* coming down from the north. Lest the rock should never be seen again, rubbings of the find were taken some years ago. The exposing of the signature was of great interest to historians, for Andrew Barton caused much ill-blood between Scotland and England, and ultimately served as one of the pretexts for the Scottish invasion which ended so disastrously at Flodden Field.

Newton Point provided the—to me—familiar sight of a coastguard station. Beyond spread out Beadnell Bay—Beadlen as the local fishermen call it—sweeping round to the peninsula of Little Rock.

Seahouses, a centre of fish-curing establishments, and North Sunderland form practically one place to

NEWTON-BY-THE-SEA

which the most ordinary sense of smell would guide you. By the lifeboat-house we asked the way of an ancient mariner, whose air of wise simplicity and simple innocence, preserved through a welter of experiences, stamped him with the ineradicable seal of the senior service. "Yes, certainly, survived the loss of the *Victoria*, served with 'Jacky' Fisher in the old *Renown*, and in this war, bless you, swept up mines off 'Bawick'!"

In sight of the sea always, but never fringing the shore, the road ran by many flourishing farms. Nowhere else in this country have I seen such vast homesteads. One would surmise that farming in the northland must be a paying proposition. The trees had long since given in, castles also, and the only ruins we could locate were the more than sparse remains of Tuggall, a Norman erection built to commemorate the spot where the body of St. Cuthbert lay a night in 1069, during a hasty retreat of the monks of Durham undertaken to save the holy corpse from the Danes.

On the hither side of Swinhoe, which takes its name from the Northumbrian family celebrated in ballad and Border history, is the Priestsdean burn, which, anywhere else, would be called a river. It is not marked large on maps, nor pointed out unless you look for it, but it is a historical stream for all that, and sings its own praises as it comes splashing down from some never-never land around Chillingham. It

is indeed the actual stage whereon was played the comedy of Brog Paterson, the renowned armourer. Hogg, telling the old tale, placed it on the Tyne, and thus robbed the Priestsdean burn of much renown.

I have no spare words for side-issues. Am I not taken to task every few pages by my publisher! "Fifty thousand words," he reminds me. "And don't forget it is the artist's book, not yours." At first I would not understand him, and answered that having had so much work to get thoroughly into Northumberland, I was well pleased to remain where I was, so long as my readers were not tired of me. Whereat he protests that Mr. Heaton Cooper would not forgive me if I so much as threatened predominance. Fifty thousand words or not, I must relate the tale of Brog Paterson for those, if there are any such, who do not know it.

It was in the reign of Robert the Bruce, and the insatiable Scots on the Border were making ready for yet another foray into Northumberland. One of the troopers, Turnbull by name, was a timorous man for a Scot, and preferred farming to fighting. He had commissioned the renowned Brog Paterson to contrive an armoured doublet which would protect the heart from spear-thrusts. Turnbull was in mortal dread of being pierced through the heart. "Protect the region of the heart" was his slogan. With great care he had selected strong plates of steel, which Paterson was instructed, oh! how carefully, to place over "the

region of the heart." Day after day the trooper visited the armourer, and gave directions afresh as to the exact position the harnessing must occupy inside the doublet. "The region o' the heart, dinna forget!" he'd cry to Brog Paterson, who glowered and "noddit." A sudden order to the raiders sent Turnbull flying to get his armoured gear, and he took the finished articles little knowing that the armourer, disgusted at the sight of a trooper so keen on protecting his heart, instead of fastening the steel plates within the doublet had affixed them into the seat of the trousers!

At dawn the raiders sallied forth, armed to the teeth, and crossing the Border, they rode onwards Bamburgh way. From thence a foraging party set out to collect food and fodder, and with them went the armoured Turnbull. Presently the party fell in with a number of Northumbrian horsemen, and a fierce encounter began. Turnbull plunged into the Priestsdean burn, and his good horse stuck in some hollow deeper than it looked. Just as the trooper was extricating himself by scrambling to the bank over his horse's head, a Redesdale man rode up like the wind and caught Turnbull a blow with a lance which would have spitted an ordinary man to the neck. Turnbull was not an ordinary man, he was an armoured man, and striking on the steel plate the hefty lunge drove the victim heels-over-head to the opposite shore, and so to safety. And there a comrade found him, lying on the ground repeating

to himself over and over in tones of reverence and high devotion: "God bless Brog Paterson of Hawick! God bless Brog Paterson of Hawick!" "Wherefore that?" questioned the other. "Wherefore that?' echoed the trooper. "He ken'd better where my heart is than I did mysel'!"

BAMBURGH CASTLE.

CHAPTER XI

BAMBURGH AND BEYOND

A tower'd citadel, a pendant rock.
Anthony and Cleopatra

We flashed along the coast-line, by miles of dunes composed of blown sand. Half close your eyes and the dunes look like the tundras of the Bering Sea; open them widely and you observe that these shifting hummocks have no vegetation upon them to speak of, nothing but the green reeds known locally as "bents." Here and there a handful of wild geraniums, mallows, and sea-rockets struggle for life.

Bamburgh uprose ahead of us like a frowning wall. It reminded me of the first time the gateway of the Rocky Mountains loomed upon my vision from the plains by Calgary, suddenly, unexpectedly, rising out of the flat.

The situation of Bamburgh is unique, covering as it does a basaltic crag some one hundred and eighty feet high and an area of eight acres. On the village side the precipitous rock starts up from the greenest

of turf, laid and levelled by the late Lord Armstrong; and steeply from the seaward edge on the north and east frontages. You get some idea of the fine position of the stronghold from the top of the battlements, and a glorious seaward panorama. The islands of the Farne snuggle together, flanked on the north by the pitiless Goldstone, upon which many good ships have broken up. To the south glooms Dunstanburgh, a shadowy sentinel; away north the Plough Rock and Seat etch themselves against a pale sky, and still farther north a little thread of blue marks where Berwick lies.

Among traditions jealously preserved is the belief that Bamburgh was Sir Lancelot's "Joyeus Garde." Alnwick put forward tentative claims to the distinction, but Alnwick's claim to "the courtliest knight that ever bare a shield" is disproved by the fact that Bamburgh is the only pre-Conquest castle in Northumberland. Says Malory, in *Morte d'Arthur:* "Some men say Alnwick, and some men say to Bamburgh." "Howbeit," said Sir Launcelot, "me repenteth sore; but I made mine avow aforetime, that in Joyous Gard I would be buried; and because of breaking of mine vow, I pray you all lead me thither. . . ."

Bamburgh has been aptly called the cradle of our race, but "King Ida's Castle, huge and square," after the Act of Union no longer possessed the importance of other days, and in the reign of James

the First the fortress passed into possession of the Forsters, good spenders all, who, in 1704, sold it to Lord Crewe, the prelate promoted to the See of Durham by Charles the Second. Lord Crewe married a Forster, aunt of the Thomas Forster who was captured in the rising of 1715, and whose escape by the aid of his sister, the brave and loving Dorothy, is a romantic tale that haunts one's imagination.

Writing as I am doing in the very room where Sir Walter Besant achieved his greatest literary work, it seems fitting to say something of his novel *Dorothy Forster*, which was the outcome of visits to Bamburgh. Sir Walter married a Miss Foster-Barham, a direct descendant of the heroine of the ride for life, Forster as it is in the old spelling.

Everywhere we journeyed in this land of monuments we came upon others. On cross-roads, on village greens, by ancient churches, on great estates, sermons in stone preached to us of those whose name liveth for evermore. In one tiny hamlet the proportionately small memorial had eight names upon it. The position of the war memorial at Bamburgh is stamped upon my memory—I can see it now and always. The tall white cross is set into a deep niche cut into the reddish basalt of the huge crag upon which the castle lies like a lion asleep, on the ground level known as the Castle Green, and directly facing the quaint village clustering round a wind-blown and

wind-shaped grove of trees. And if your window overlooks the massive fortress you see in all lights the white symbol, backed by the imperishable rock. It was a great thought to place the cross where it is, on the beginnings of our faith to its fulness thereof.

To return to the castle. It is a restored example, and partly rebuilt. Not a stone, not a section is missing, and if, here and there, it strikes one as touching perilously near the ideal of that pseudo-antique town-hall we must remember it was renovated for utility, to be lived in. In Elizabeth's reign the castle fell into a ruinous condition although held by the Crown, perhaps because it was held by the Crown. In 1610 when the period of private ownership commenced the place began to look up somewhat. Claudius Forster received the lordship and manor of Bamburgh from James the First, and until 1704 the Forsters remained in possession when the estate was sold, in payment of debts, to Lord Crewe. The late Lord Armstrong purchased the castle in 1894 from the Crewe Trustees, and at once commenced the work of restoration and rebuilding, which took twelve years to accomplish and cost a fortune. The genius of hydraulics and ordnance did not live to see his dream-castle arise in more than its old glory, and the work was carried to completion by the present holder of the title, who lives at the ideally lovely Cragside, near Rothbury. Bamburgh's fortunes

HOLY ISLAND CHURCH.

have changed with the times, and the proud stronghold that sheltered kings now accommodates summer visitors, being let furnished in six sections for not less than a month at a stretch. I don't suppose such a holiday is a cheap affair—you cannot summer-holiday in ancestral castles cheaply. The keep, I was given to understand, is the most costly suite, but all the apartments are what house-agents call "self-contained." The visitor who comes off with the King's Hall must be a trifle overweighted, and living up to the keep, built somewhere about 1095 or 1165, is surely something of a strain.

"It's grand, and you canna expect to be baith grand and comfortable."

The Longstone, on which is the lighthouse so closely connected with the memory of Grace Darling, lies on the outside edge of the Farnes, of which the largest, the Farne, lies a mile or so from the coast. Grace Darling was born in 1815 in a house facing the church at Bamburgh, and it was in 1838, when staying at the Longstone, where her father was keeper of the lighthouse, that the young girl's heroism claimed the admiration of the nation and the world. The story is well known; even the grown-up children of to-day, who shun history like the plague and regard *Tales of a Grandfather* as the maudlin talk of a dull old gentleman, listen to the epic of the loss of the *Forfarshire*.

Both St. Aidan and St. Cuthbert showed a pre-

dilection for retiring to the Farne islet, an inexpressibly dreary spot. It possessed attractions, for after being Bishop of Hexham, and later of Lindisfarne, Cuthbert returned to his island-cell, wherein he died A.D. 687.

At low tide the rocky islets of the Farnes appear numerous beyond maps. Some have names Dickens himself could not have bettered. The Wawmses, the Wedums, the Noxes (Knokys), the Harcars, the Crumstone, the Navestone, the Megstone—are they not attractive sounding?

Exploring the Farnes is one of the favourite amusements of the summer visitor, and the Pinnacles, with sea-birds wedged closely on the table tops and ledges, are widely known. I suppose there is no amasser of picture-postcards who has not in his collection a view of what the Pinnacles look like in the nesting season of the guillemots and kittiwakes. All the islands are haunted by sea-birds of every kind. The puffin, or sea-parrot, which in childish days I knew as "the telegraph boy" from his speed and hurry, builds all about, mostly in burrows, and you must have a care in spring lest you break up a dozen happy homes. On the lonely Brownsman a bird-watcher is a temporary hermit in the close season. He has a tiny cottage by the beacon, and time passes with him somehow. The event of his day is the Trinity House boat coming from Seahouses to the Longstone, and by means of signals he keeps in touch with

the world. Beyond the Crumstone—an island after Barrie's own heart, for sometimes it is there and sometimes it isn't—is the haunt of seals, "hair-seals" as we call them in Alaska to distinguish them from the fur-bearers. They are epicures, and know where the best salmon trout is to be found. The Wawmses belong to the cormorants, and all day long you can see some members of the clan drying their wings in tireless patience.

The church at Bamburgh is notable, and dates from the twelfth century. Built upon the site of a wooden edifice, it was founded by St. Aidan, who died at the west end of it. I have no knowledge of ecclesiastical architecture, but the veriest amateur could tell at a glance that St. Aidan's has numberless rare features, not the least of them being the fact that the old church has survived centuries of turmoil, and stands to-day a perfect specimen of its period. There is a leper window, and a curious crypt of two chambers which was once the mausoleum of the Forsters. Here for a time lay the body of General Forster, who commanded the Jacobites of the north in the famous rising of the '15, and that of his sister Dorothy, who shares with Grace Darling the distinction of being one of the two renowned heroines who lie in the graveyard. Grace Darling is not buried beneath the canopied tomb erected in sight of the sea, but simply and plainly with her relatives who rest in the south-west corner of the churchyard. Passing

ships, by the aid of a glass, can speak the memorial, and during the herring-curing season at Seahouses hundreds of fisherfolk from all parts visit the resting-place of the heroic girl and wear away the grass around the monument, which is by Raymond Smith, and depicts Grace Darling lying at full length. Her hands are crossed upon her breast and in her right arm rests an oar. It was interesting to be told that flowers still come for the grave from unknown people on the anniversary of Grace Darling's death eighty years agone.

Budle Bay is the spot where the Childy Wynd beached his ship when he came to kill the "laidley worm" at Spindleston. A low-lying region this, known locally as "The Slakes," the estuary of two streams, and the haunt of birds innumerable.

"You ain't gwine to write about birds?" said an apprehensive nasal voice.

I had thought of doing so. I like writing about birds.

"Wal, for the land's sake, don't call them 'feathered friends.' And jes' keep off callin' them 'little denizens.' Say now, do!"

A trip to Lindisfarne, or Holy Island, may be pleasant enough in summer, but on an October morning, an exceedingly early morning, with a sharp easterly wind blowing, the jaunt is not to be taken in hand lightly, inadvisedly, or wantonly. By the time the one-horse pill-box on wheels, which we

LINDISFARNE PRIORY, HOLY ISLAND.

hired at Beal, had reached the first of the shelters placed for those who are overtaken by the tide to climb into, I wished Lindisfarne had been "taken as read." Our Jehu followed a long row of tall poles, and drove of necessity at a snail's pace. As our wheels sank in the sand, cockles churned up—"clams" the American called them. Well, clams are of the cockle tribe, but much, much bigger than cockles.

Lindisfarne and the monastery founded by St. Aidan in A.D. 635 was the centre of religious life in the north, and from it went forth the missionaries who gave the northern folk their first instruction in Christianity. St. Aidan died in his wooden church at Bamburgh, and on hearing of the Saint's end St. Cuthbert, a Northumbrian shepherd lad, fifteen years old, resolved upon a religious life, and eventually became Bishop of Lindisfarne. Many are the miracles said to have been worked by Cuthbert, and to-day some of them rank as usages. Do the feasters at great banquets realize, as they pass the "loving-cup" from hand to hand, that in doing so they are commemorating and perpetuating an ancient act of St. Cuthbert's?

Of the other early bishops of Lindisfarne Wilfrid is the only one of whom the ordinary person knows anything at all. He, too, was a northerner of an ancient family, but his ecclesiasticism ran on Thomas à Becket and Wolsey lines rather than those of the unworldly Aidan and Cuthbert. At Hexham, among

other places, Wilfrid carried out schemes of church building on a scale hitherto undreamed of. We shall see something of the noble abbey there in due course.

Holy Island is an island at high tide only. At low tide pilgrims can march or drive across the miles of sand and get back to the mainland in between tides. The old village of red-tiled and thatched cottages lies at the south-western end of the island and close around the parish church, and the magnificent pile of ruins which is Lindisfarne Abbey. The exquisitely wrought Norman arches and arcading alone make it well worth anyone's while to risk being caught out by the tide and stranded over the next. A lover of fine architecture will not be able thoroughly to examine so many rarities in the limited time at his disposal—it is happier to stay a day or two. And learn from *Marmion* what Scott felt about the glory that was Lindisfarne :

> In Saxon strength that Abbey frowned
> With massive arches broad and round,
> That rose alternate, row and row,
> On ponderous columns short and low.
>
> * * * * *
>
> On the deep walls the heathen Dane
> Had poured his impious rage in vain ;
> And needful was such strength to these,
> Exposed to the tempestuous seas,
> Scourg'd by the wind's eternal sway,
> Open to rovers fierce as they.

Scott was exercising the poet's prerogative, for the ancient Saxon monastery and church at Lindisfarne, founded by St. Aidan, was cast down by the Danes in A.D. 875. However, the Benedictines who built the Norman structure, the remains of which we reverence to-day, used in it much of the old material. Experts tell us that the Benedictines as they fashioned the glorious cathedral kept ever before their eyes the vision splendid of Durham.

If the parish church of Holy Island were not overshadowed by its ecclesiastical neighbour it would rank as one of the important ancient fanes of Northumberland. As it is, overwhelmed and overawed by the magnificence of the ruinous abbey, the lesser building puts in a good claim to the notice of those skilled in architectural values. Our guide-book described the church as "a perfect example of the early English period." I can only speak for the outside. We did not achieve getting within.

In the hotel where we sojourned at Bamburgh I found the nucleus of a library on a dusty shelf. It was an educational book, and the first page ran thus: "A church-door is not like your front-door, for a church-door is never locked. Christ said, 'Come Unto Me.'"

In this connexion I should like to quote Mr. A. G. Bradley, for whose book on Northumberland I have profound admiration, unshared, I imagine, by the artist who accompanied the Bradley "swallow-glide."

For the author upset all the accepted rules of colour-book production. The text, not the pictures, was the thing. Mr. Bradley is speaking of the church at Holy Island. And first he tells us that he, who has hunted church keys as much as anyone, would have held as nothing an expedition after the key of this barred door.

"For this church, of all churches in the kingdom, where are neither tramps, vagabonds, nor ruffians, and whence come a small but steady stream of respectable and presumably intelligent pilgrims, is kept securely locked, with the key lurking somewhere in the village. This, too, when a relentless tide is waiting to swallow you up, and time that like the other waits for no man somewhat pressing."

The castle, on the outer southern point of the island, stands bold and magnificent as a castle in dreams and fairy-tales. The entrance shows every point and principle with which the lone fortresses of dreamland are always equipped. One might say that it presents most artfully the accumulated experience of successful castle planners, in dreams or otherwise. It is contrary and unexpected, too, for outstanding features which one expects to find entrenched in every castle are not here. Built in the reign of Henry the Eighth in defiance of the Scots and the French, the fortress is now modernized into a more or less up-to-date residence.

Thoughts of the unchanging tide disturbed our

minds. We took a long look at the sea almost surrounding us and at the little green farms edged by the golden-brown, bare shore. A cataract of light falling from behind a grey cloud cascaded over the Cheviots, and the edges of it illuminated Berwick and the far, faint outline of the bridge across the Tweed. Away beyond the purple-blue town a shadow formed into St. Abb's Head to which a serpent streak—the Lammermuirs—curved down.

On the Great North Road again, running through Berwick Bounds, a territory of some eight square miles with a frontage of three miles to the sea which demanded, and still demands, I believe, special mention in all royal proclamations and edicts: "And in Our Town of Berwick-upon-Tweed." Hereabouts we came into contact with important farms and fertile lands conducted upon a bigger scale than any we had hitherto seen, and for the first time we made acquaintance with the bondagers working in the fields close up to the main road in their picturesque and useful workaday dress. The bondager is an interesting survival, and the name shook the American to his roots, as did the term "hind," which merely means a farm-labourer hired by the year upon "agreement," as they call it in agricultural circles. Bondagers—I like the old-world description—are women servants who work in the fields, and they are the Northumberland equivalent of what the southerner grandiloquently calls "land-girls." And when my American

took exception to the word I asked him if it sounds any more offensive than the "hired girl" and "hired man" used in his country. The Northumbrian bondager is not a soul in servitude. She works long hours, and she works hard. She does not dress for work in the musical-comedy attire of the land-girl of the south, but on Saturday afternoons a bondager plays and plays hard, and her radiance then makes up for the dull simplicity of the week. A bondager in a *cloche* hat of red satin, and a blue, as she calls it "crep der sheen" dress, shapeless as a chemise and as sack-like, bare brawny arms—sleeves are extremely short in fashionable circles at the moment—white silk stockings, and cross-gartered shoes with Louis heels, is a sight to make a land-girl chuck her job and go north.

Making friends with a young farmer who, like ourselves, sought an odd little inn where the last thing in the world we could hope for was an eatable meal, and the very last thing anybody could get, I asked him for an explanation of the independence of Berwick-upon-Tweed, which, though since 1482 "for ever England," does not form an English county. His solution of the riddle ran something like this: During the cruel hour of Temptation, Satan displayed to their best advantage all the great kingdoms of the earth in an endeavour to tempt the Holy One. Berwick alone was withheld, and Berwick the Evil Spirit kept hidden beneath his thumb. He wanted it

for himself, and was determined nobody else should obtain possession of it.

You would expect Berwick, the ancient bone of contention between one army and another, to carry its great history on its scarred face. As a matter of fact comparatively few of the myriad antiquities have outlasted the assault of a rampant civilization. The old castle made way for the railroad, and the down platform occupies the exact location of the ancient banqueting hall. We circuited the walls, like the good trippers we were, and looked over the so-often demolished and rebuilt relics for signs of the thirteenth-century portions as the guide-book advised. A massive three-storied tower facing towards Scotland was obviously extremely antiquated. In it was hung and rung the warning bell that told of an approaching foe, and from its summit blazed the beacon fire, or hot-trod, that called the men of the north-eastern marches to arms.

A church sheltered by the ramparts at the top of the town was rebuilt in Cromwell's day, and by reason of its meticulous plainness is an interesting sight to see. In the original church Joan, sister of Edward the Third, was married to David, son of King Robert Bruce.

The Curfew, rung from a pseudo-antique belfry poised above a conglomerate building of George the Second's period, made up to the American for all shortcomings in Berwick. And our chauffeur con-

nected himself and his name with the Woolmarket Street, which to-day typifies the colony of Flemings invited to Berwick by Alexander the Third.

The history of Berwick—battles and sieges, captures and surrenders, hangings, executions, murders and sudden deaths—is on the grand scale. I shall not attempt to retail it, but content myself with looking at the high uplands, a landmark from all sides, where was fought the Battle of Halidon Hill where Edward the Third defeated the Scots under Archibald Douglas.

James the First commenced the stone bridge over the Tweed, and it cost his Government £14,960 1s. 6d.—very cheap for a fifteen-arched bridge; and I wonder on what portion of the structure the canny Scot banged the odd "saxpence"? In later years another £10,000 was forthcoming for rebuilding, a sum obtained from the probate duty on the will of Thomas Sutton, founder of the Charterhouse. It is a bridge of blood and sighs. Anything peculiarly unpleasant was deposited upon it. As, for instance, half the body of Sir William Wallace, and all of the live Countess of Buchan's, shut up in a wooden cage shaped like a crown. This was a reprisal for setting the crown on Bruce's head at Scone, and within this trap the Countess existed for six years, after which she was let out. King after king and queen after queen has Berwick Bridge seen come and pass.

The first cannon fired in England was employed

against Berwick by Henry the Fourth, engaging the Earl of Northumberland, who was at that period holding Berwick Castle against the King. The shot (a ball of cast iron, weighing ninety-six pounds, was found in 1811, buried in the ruins of the castle walls) so alarmed the garrison that it immediately surrendered.

Time! I'm sorry. This is a race against words, and I've miles of ground to cover! I wish I could linger longer in the old-world place, and guide you to the moors beyond Halidon where brave Grizel Cochrane robbed the mail in order to possess herself of her father's death-warrant, a feat of courage and finesse unparalleled in the epic stories of the stirring days of old.

Skirting the Tweed with its leafy banks turned brown and gold, we made a détour, altogether outside the scope of this book, and crossed the river to Lamberton Toll, another Gretna Green, to which innumerable couples looked back with happy or blighted memories according to results. James the Fourth of Scotland, who fell at Flodden, was married at Lamberton to Henry the Seventh's daughter, but not for the usual crown piece and the indispensable noggin of gin.

Crossing the Border again to the Northumbrian side we found ourselves well out of Berwick Bounds, travelling towards Norham, greatest and most important of all fortresses on Tweed-side.

CHAPTER XII

"NORHAM'S CASTLED STEEP"

Galling the gleaned land with hot assays,
Girding with grievous siege castles and towers.
Henry VI.

The rude ribs of that ancient castle.
Richard II.

On a lonely road from which, so far as I know, no one of our numerous new peers has taken a territorial title, it will be safe to voice a grievance. The cleverest amateur detective will not be able to connect a road with any scene of my discomfiture.

Whilst our effete aristocracy were generous in giving me every facility to see their castles and treasures it was otherwise with some of the titled *nouveaux riches.*

"His Lordship is in residence, and nobody is permitted to see over the castle. If you'll call when his Lordship is away. . . ."

"His Lordship is in residence!"

Shades of kings and knights of old! Shades of old gateways supporting mysterious coats-of-arms won on the busy floors of marts of commerce!

His Lordship is in residence!

What the disgruntled American asked was: "When air you gwine to make these fool titles non-transferable?"

I couldn't tell him. But—the world moves.

The red sandstone keep of Norham rose amid a great wash of lemon-yellow deepening to orange. It was a worthy first glimpse of a worthy ruin—I have never forgotten it among the dozens I have seen. The situation of the castle is magnificent, poised as it is high above the Tweed, which flows at the brink of an expanse of green hummocks of turf wherein is enshrined heaped ruins of the once vast stronghold. The stream runs here in shallow rapids, a fury of distressed water, and a gentle gusty spray floated mistily in the wind.

It was at Norham, you remember, that the Lord Marmion, the King's envoy, was received before the fatal Flodden. Scott saw the place as I would have you see it, thus, and thus:

> Day set on Norham's castled steep,
> And Tweed's fair river, broad and deep,
> And Cheviot's mountains lone:
> The battled towers, the donjon keep,
> The loophole grates, where captives weep,
> The flanking walls that round it sweep,
> In yellow lustre shone.
> The warriors on the turrets high,
> Moving athwart the evening sky,
> Seem'd forms of giant height:
> Their armour, as it caught the rays,
> Flash'd back again the western blaze
> In lines of dazzling light.

A prince-bishop of Durham built Norham early in the twelfth century as a defence for the northern areas of his diocese, and portions of the early buildings are still in existence. Indeed, the whole of the fragments of Norham are by no means fragmentary, and even in decay hold a dignity and majesty such as no other Northumbrian ruin possesses. Kings and a queen and bold knights have contended here; the quiet woods have echoed as no others to the clash of arms, and the stirring slogans that drifted downstream are still, so the old folks say, called from rock to rock when the water flows in spate. It is a beautiful fancy, one of many beautiful fancies I heard as I passed along.

Norham village has an air of its own. It lies on a level with the river, which is as it should be, for old Norham was Ubbanford, or the upper ford of two important crossings, which later became North-ham (abbreviated to Norham), and the limit of the See of Durham. The main, and only, street is wide, and there is a typical green and a cross set up on an ancient foundation—a young head on old shoulders. I stood by it and dreamed undisguisedly, looking up and away to the keep of the grand old ruin seen over a foreground of copper-hued trees. From here Norham seemed more glorious than ever, and the charm of antiquity was upon most things that lay about me. The street, fringed each side by low houses, was always wide and spacious, having given

room in amplitude to the formidable armies of Scotland that poured across the ancient bridge at the turn of the village, or over the ford when the bridge was not there. And each sturdy pony was loaded to the gunwale, after the fashion of Alice's White Knight, with its rider's outfit of oatmeal and cooking-pan. A warrior was his own caterer in the good old days, and cultivated the war spirit on a little porridge.

The church at Norham, "half as old as time," is of high importance, and in its nave Edward the First debated with the Scots on the claims of Baliol.

The churchyard is closely packed with graves of warriors who have fallen hereabouts adown the centuries, unmarked sometimes, unknown often. A poet's tale woven around the peaceful acreage has been told of many a graveyard in the northland, but Norham is the setting for the gem. Perhaps because I have the strange writer's itch to find things out I have gone out of my way seeking old-folk tales, records of strange chances, and stories of heritages of birth and death. Discovering this rare tenderness, it seems to me most beautiful of all.

In the days when Norham Castle was a seat of the great prince-bishop of Durham, and the church gave sanctuary to all who sought it, a poor serving-lad often came and rested awhile on one green grave or another, and he never forgot to say a prayer for the dead. One night, at the hour the people of the north

call "the gloamin'," a rabble of the village, out for murder, chased the serving-boy from the castle gate, down the long street, and on towards the door of the church. The lad was trying to gain the sanctuary he knew lay within, but his path was cut by his pursuers, and the most he could do was to close the huge gate of the graveyard and hold it against the cruel mob. Putting all his weight behind the effort he tried to clasp the rusty lock, but the pressure was strong and the opening of the barrier a matter of moments.

Miserere mei Deus, et salve me!

An icy wind blew across the grass, and from every grave uprose a gleaming spear. Still the murderous crowd pressed forward. . . . A deathly pause. . . . The spirits of the ancient dead burst from their tombs clad in their war panoplies, carrying claymores and bills, shouting as of old their slogans: *A Shaftan! and a Fenwyke! Percy! Percy! St. George! St. Andrew! A Berwyke! A Bulmer!*

And lo! as the crowd melted away before the spectral foe, the serving-boy, kneeling now, looked over the wilderness of graves and repeated his prayer for the dead. There were no spears, no warriors—silence only, and the long, long night of sleep.

More lovely than ever was Twizel as we crossed the bridge once again. The sullen Till flowed clear beside the bracken-covered shores. Autumn leaves lay in golden heaps upon the grey rocks, and Twizel Castle, all marled and aerial, stood silhouetted against

a framework of skeleton trees. At the turn beneath the precipice rock, cranes were fishing, standing close together like sentinels, up to their ash-coloured feathers in water.

A region of castles. Great strongholds, that now have fallen to ruin, once stood on every side. Duddo is nothing but a fragment on a hill; Etal, built in 1340, has still considerable remnants to show. Ford, built two years earlier, I have previously mentioned, but I did not say, as I should have done, that the village at Ford is one of the best kept in the country, and a model of all that the Squire thinks a village ought to be. It is their own fault if the village children are not superior little people. They do their lessons in a schoolroom decorated by Scriptural frescoes which took a Marchioness of Waterford twenty-five years to accomplish. I am no judge of art, but the decorations look to me first-class work. One or two of the large wall frescoes have been affected by damp, but the rest have stood the test of time. The Waterfords owned Ford nearly a century agone, and the artist-Marchioness was a Lady Bountiful whose memory still lives.

At the gate of the schoolroom the Vicar came and gave us friendly greeting—helped, indeed, to start the car. Some people have a way with cars, and just as a fractious horse will move for one man and not for another, so it is with a sulky automobile. The padre told us he had just come from a South London parish

to—and he waved his arms—"this!" And, indeed, "this" must have been a change from a parish in South London, where he must have felt like a lark on a sod of earth in a cage. I told the American so, but he said writers romance as their thoughts race ahead, and perhaps there was no sod and no cage. There was certainly a lark. I saw that for myself.

One ancestral house after another crowds this area of Northumberland, and, alas! I have no space in which to tell of them. The roads and hedgerows are picturesque, and there are acres of land upon which the ploughs were busy and fine cattle—no "blue-greys" here—fed. Everywhere the startled pheasants crossed our front and landed with a plop into the cover beyond. An energetic sprinter tried to race us until, finding himself outclassed, he screamed wildly and flew high above the tree-tops and out of our sight.

Up the vale of Tweed we motored to Wark, near which place stands all, a tiny all, that remains of the castle so famous in Border annals. No other fortress, save Norham and Berwick, met such assaults and sackings. Up to the Act of Union, Wark Castle was intact, but, like other castles not used as homes, the fine place was allowed to fall to pieces, as it had frequently done before, though not of its own volition. Henry the Second repaired Wark, John burnt it down, and so the record of siege and battery goes on. Henry the Third and his Queen stayed in the

rebuilt stronghold all August and September, 1255. Edward the First held his Court here at Eastertide, 1295, and then befel the direful day in 1318 when "the Scottes came into England and destroyed the castells of Wark and Harbottle." Many kings of England put up at Wark, and naturally with so glorious a history of siege and surrender, demolition and building up, there is attached to this place a story with what the American called "a punch." Here was enacted the drama of the romantic siege during which the celebrated Countess of Salisbury proved herself a worthy model for that other famous castle-holder, the Countess of Derby. Froissart has related the story of Wark beleaguered with his usual care and chivalry, and most of us know a little about the historical incursion of David Bruce's army, during which Wark was invested as a result of the Countess of Salisbury's nephew falling upon the rearguard of the Scots as they were about to cross the Tweed homewards with the cattle and treasure they had looted. The Earl was away, but his Countess resisted the Scots with all spirit. Edward the Third, by this time, had reached Alnwick, and under cover of a storm the Countess's valiant nephew left the besieged castle disguised, and riding across country reached the King, who was implored to hasten to the rescue. In a few hours the royal forces raised the siege, and there was a scene of revelry by night when Edward was at no pains to conceal his admiration for

the beauty and courage of his hostess. As he danced a stately measure with her the King felt something beneath his shoe—he stooped and picked it up. It was a lady's garter, and the standers-by were sniggering. "*Honi soit qui mal y pense*," said the King, rebukingly, trying the garter around his knee. And so was founded the motto, and so was created the Order of the Garter, which takes precedence of all other distinctions in this country. It was established in honour of a woman, but it is never, save in the case of royalty, granted to one.

Towards Kirknewton the rounded heights of the Cheviots loomed on our right, and we saw closely Yeavering Bell, one of the best known of the Cheviot range. Its summit was a fortified camp of the ancient Britons, of which considerable evidences are still in existence. There are traces of huts within an encircling wall, and excavations have unearthed many interesting relics. More than one historian has contended that the fragmentary stone circles are in some way connected with a form of worship. To use the words of Mr. Pecksniff, "Pagan, I regret to say."

From the summit of Yeavering Bell an unsurpassable view is obtained if one is lucky enough to strike a day with no mist about it. Up the shining vale lies Hethpoole, the Heathpool of to-day, sacred to the memory of Northumberland's greatest son, Cuthbert Collingwood, who for his services in the Royal Navy, and notably at Trafalgar, became Baron

NORHAM VILLAGE GREEN.

Collingwood of Caldeburne and Hethpoole. Caldeburne (Coldburn now) lies in the Cheviots, and Hethpoole was Collingwood's home.

We are to-day engaged in bearing up under a steady rain of letters and reminiscences written by more or less distinguished people, and we are apt to forget examples which far outshine anything the average scribe of the present can effect. Lord Collingwood's letters to his wife form a case in point. If they were republished anonymously, labelled "The Tenderness of a Sailor," they would out-rival and out-sell most of the latter-day biographies of which the critics, furiously raging together, are frequently unable to say more than, "So-and-So wrote this, therefore let it pass for a book of letters."

The trees round about Hethpoole are Collingwood's trees. He planted oaks with the assiduity of the legendary admiral who poked into holes every acorn he saw. "I wish some parts of Hethpoole could be selected for plantations," he wrote to his wife, and again: "Tell me, how do the trees which I planted thrive? Is there shade under the three oaks for a comfortable summer seat? Do the poplars grow at the wall, and does the wall of the terrace stand firm?"

North-west of Yeavering is Kirknewton, and here the Colledge water comes tumbling down from the Hen-hole on the big Cheviot, and joins the Glen where the monk Paulinus, during a busy thirty-six

days at Yeavering with King Edwin, a recent convert to the Christian faith, baptized on the great scale. Pallinsburn, a name now used solely for the fine house some little distance away from the actual scene of the missionary effort, commemorates the name and labours of Paulinus.

On the north brink of the glen, as it curves to join the Till, stands Copeland Castle, now named Coupland, rebuilt in 1614. John de Copeland was among the twelve English knights chosen to meet the Scottish representatives in an attempt at settlement of Border disputes in 1249; another John de Copeland took David of Scotland prisoner in the Battle of Durham, 1347, for which he was created "a knight baneret" and had £500 a year—a fortune in those days—settled upon himself and his heirs. Back of Coupland lies Milfield Plain, abutting on Flodden, and Milfield has a battle history of its own. The romantic levels saw the first of the conflicts in which King Arthur

> Fought, and in twelve battles overcame
> The heathen hordes, and made a realm, and reigned.

With the line of the Cheviots, autumn clad, always in view, we took the road past Humbleton, saluting again the battle-stone round which our friends the bondagers were singling turnips, and wondering why these trippers in the mud-splashed car looked so eagerly in their direction. Through Wooler, sleepier

than ever, and not in the least animated by a desire to mend the gas main over which some heavier-than-usual lorry had passed, we proceeded by a fine road to Lilburne Tower, very much of a ruin, and the seat in 1234 of the celebrated John Lilburne whose descendant, another John, proved so turbulent a spirit in the time of the Civil Wars. The remains of the old tower face the rapidly ageing newer mansion. I like the name of the Lil burn. It has a home-like sound. In my country we call everything that is small "lil," and speak of "the lil islan'." And here in far Northumberland I find a lil burn.

Near Ilderton we sought an entrenchment marked upon our map and failed to locate it. There are many camps and circles in this vicinity, Roman, Saxon, and Druidical, and a few of these we discovered in the course of a series of expeditions into the Cheviots and towards Old Bewick. One of these trips took us by Roddam Hall, which is built on the foundations of an older house. Of the curious grant of this manor by Athelstane I have already spoken. The *Testa de Nevill* is silent respecting the family, though it mentions the place-name, but Leland in his charming way alludes to them as "men of fayre landes in Northumbrelande, about Tylle river."

Fleming, our chauffeur, gleaned news of a fine fall of water, a little Niagara, he said, and dwelt so much

on its attractiveness that we were up and off with him one early morning. The booming of the cataract came to our ears before we reached Linhope (which you must call "Linup"), and suddenly, without any warning, this torrent of the Breamish flashed into sight. The water fell fifty or sixty feet down the precipitous sides of pointed rocks in exceeding volume, and then broke up, descending quite slowly, like snow. How I should love to see the turmoil that the snows would bring! The early sun gave a glint to the whiteness which was rarely beautiful, accentuating the delicate etchings, and the definiteness of the colours. At the bottom of the fall the tossed spray arose enshrouding the falls, and as it lighted on the pinnacled masses of basalt, meeting a different temperature, it condensed, and formed thousands of tiny cascades in the rocks.

To change the subject to an event casting its shadows before — I had by this time become an expert key-hunter. Anybody who thinks key-chasing a fool's game must stay away from Northumberland, for it is the same north as it is south—we must lock up our ancient monuments lest there be none left for those who are to reverence them after us. There is art in key-chasing, let me tell you, considerable finesse, excitement and disappointment, too. What connexion there is between old keys and ginger-beer I am unable to define, but if in doubt as to the exact location of a much-wanted key I invariably made

for a row of ginger-beer bottles standing athwart a window-sill, and behind them the key would almost certainly lie hidden. Sometimes the key when discovered was as confounding as the key when lost, and the last lock it would open was the one it was reputed to fit. However, there was usually a way round or over. The key said to admit a pilgrim to the enclosure surrounding the Percy Cross on the left of the road at Hedgely—left, that is, coming from Wooler—was another of the delusive "open sesames." We did without its assistance, and climbed in. The weather-worn shaft of reddish stone, embossed with the fetterlock and crescent, memorizes the spot where fell Ralph Percy, "the Gledd (Kite) of Dunstanburgh" as he was called, in the Battle of Hedgley Moor, April, 1464, and here was spoken his immortal "I have saved the bird in my bosom," an enigmatical speech that has been the heart and core of Border ballads and tales, and generally taken as meaning that he, deserted though he was by the Lancastrians, had not failed in loyalty. The ancient shaft is wearing away with time and the weather, and I have sketches of it which give measurements far in excess of its inches to-day.

In spite of the energies of local builders there are still many standing crosses and stones to be found. They are called crosses, but none of the really ancient specimens that I can recall are crosses, being rough shafts of whinstone set upright in another stone or

shoulder-piece. They mark a variety of commemorable events, combats, victories, surrenders, deaths ; but numberless important memorial stones which lasted out the seventeenth century have been thrown down, and are now used as lintels, or doorsteps, or well-stones.

Whittingham—"Whitt'njum" as the natives call it—is one of the leafiest, prettiest villages in Northumberland, and its church a fine specimen. A Saxon king founded it, and bestowed the lands and the religious foundation on Lindisfarne. There is little remaining of Ceolwulf's church, but the present old building contains a certain amount of Saxon masonry, and before the "renovation," in 1840, Saxon carvings were to be seen in quantity. Doubtless if the Saxon base of the tower had been portable the "restorers" would have moved it also. We got into the venerable building by a ruse, since we could not enter by the key. This locking up of Protestant churches is a discouragement into which ecclesiastics who wonder why religion is losing its hold should look. I have never found a Roman Catholic place of worship held as a fortress in this deplorable fashion. Again, however, the churchyard made up by its open character for all that the barred church denied. Every gravestone told a story. Some had shears and sickles engraved, others bore pickaxes, hammers, spades, scissors and scales and the sword of justice, skulls and crossed bones, hour-glasses and open books, and upon

one ancient scrap of masonry I traced a worn hand holding an arrow.

Adown the vale of Whittingham meanders the Aln on its shortish journey to the sea by way of Hulne Abbey and Alnwick, and hard by the pretty stream stands a fine example of a pele-tower to which the villagers of olden days repaired when the hot-trod signalled the approach of raiding enemies. The ancient sanctuary still practises knight-errantry, and is to-day, as the inscription upon it tells, a refuge for the poor of Whittingham.

This village has a peacefulness that places it in a class apart. It is not of a bucolic nature, but restful and charming and appealing. A statue, in shooting dress, of a former Lord Ravensworth faces serenely the "high street." The statue might have been a model for another, so small and compact and yet so complete is it. Statues, I think, should be life-size at least, or not insistently small. Let it pass. For I am no critic of art.

Away in the woods—and such woods!—not many miles off lies hidden the great pile of Callaly Castle, once the seat of a de Callaly, who held it for services to Henry the Third. And from that de Callaly the lands descended to the Claverings through Roger Fitz-Roger, who was Baron of Warkworth and Clavering. Callaly has little of the castle about it to-day, and much more of a palace. The square tower or keep, at the west end of the grey stone

mansion, is extremely old. The east wing and the centre block would be called modern, as time goes at Callaly. The present owner, whose ancestors purchased the castle from the Claverings, is Major Alex. Browne, a noted character in Northumberland in more ways than one. He told me of the difficulty the builders experienced when they set about raising the mansion beside the massive pile which was old Callaly. As fast as the stones were laid on a hill-top so the fairy-folk cast them down. At last, discouraged, the foreman-builder fell asleep beside the "stewing-ponds," where the fish were kept all ready for Fridays, and which may be seen to-day, overgrown a little, but otherwise not altered by the passing of many centuries. And as the foreman wakened, he heard a tiny voice fluting in the reeds like a bird:

> Callaly Castle stands up on the height,
> Up by the day, and down by the night.
> Set it down yon shepherd's haugh,
> There it shall stand and never fa'."

So Callaly was built in the haugh and not on the hill, and there it remains.

For myself, as I wandered with my host through miles of apartments, lofty and vast, and as I admired, as even so non-artistic a person as myself must admire, treasures uncountable, I recalled my own atomy "stake in the country," and esteemed myself lucky. I should never have done for a Pope or a profiteer. Perpetual splendour and sumptuousness

adumbrate the spirits. Callaly was as grand a place as any I went through in Northumberland, but I could sing with unmixed pleasure as I looked in fancy at my, for the time being, abandoned cottage and then at the mansion in the haugh, "I wouldn't leave my little wooden hut for you!" Whenever I traversed these enormous houses of the north—so large, indeed, that one puzzles as to the methods adopted for finding the way about (could it be the white pebbles of Little Poucet?)—I always thought the same thing, and that was: "Nothing but happy children playing, interminable children, hordes of children, could make these floored acreages bearable!" The American, ever business-like, considered that the proper way to utilize the marble halls was to convert them into departmental stores. They were, he said, ideal for such a purpose, but where the clients were to come from he could not say.

CHAPTER XIII

OVER THE HILLS AND FAR AWAY

Rough quarries, rocks and hills whose heads touch heaven.
Othello.

This is the true beginning of our end.
A Midsummer Night's Dream.

EVERYWHERE the torches of the beeches glowed rustily gold, and over the sparsely spread scarlet and carmine fruits of wild rose and hawthorn the spiders flung fine cords. Feverishly they worked at their looms—the tide of time was against them.

And still we came upon reminders of ancient castles and towers. Sometimes they were completely ruinous, and we reached them by crossing the "white lands," high wind-blown fields into which the moors slid and merged. Often we saw stately, roofless walls standing forlornly beside little burns passing seaward with a gentle rush of water. Edlingham Castle has nothing left but a grey and beautifully arched and vaulted tower, dating back to the twelfth century. Its position is a fine one—at the head of a sombre valley.

Leland called high-standing Rothbury, upon which

place we descended from fell country and picturesque moorlands, "such a town as Corbridge." Its history may be somewhat similar, but its situation and plan is vastly different. Rothbury lies in the wonderland of Northumbria, and the location of it on the green hills of Coquetdale, beside the river, reminds me in some unexplainable way of Rome. Perhaps it is the immense dignity of Rothbury, or its vague air of past glories, that weaves a spell around the place. A seaman would have something to say of the "look-out." Well, no town that I know has a better.

An attractive green, which broke the even vista of the long, wide street, was bordered by the grey-green boles of ash trees, the boughs of which were draped in the delicate lacings of samara—a pretty sight. The old church provides another example of what may be done by the restorer. Bernard Gilpin, "the Apostle of the North," frequently preached within, and was known on occasion to descend from his pulpit in order to act as umpire in one of the everlasting brawls of the Border which occasionally continued into church-going hours. The font is much admired by ecclesiastical architects, being curiously carven. It dates back some eight hundred years, when the manor of Rothbury was granted to the Percys. "The parsonaige of Rothiebery," as the old records call Whitton Tower, is rather a wonderful relic, with enormously thick walls, and it has been modernized sufficiently to make it comfortable. It is a rare

example, being so intact, of those grim defences which, more than anything in the building line, illustrate the warlike character of the neighbourhood and inhabitants, of whom an old chronicler speaks thus: "The people of the said Cock-dayle be best p'pared for defence and most defensyble people of themselves, and of the truest and best sorte of anye that do inhabyte, endlonge, the fronnter or border of the said mydle m'ches of England."

Isn't "most defensyble people of themselves" a delightful touch?

We poised upon the rim of the town, looking into the vale through which the bright Coquet, shining palely in the fitful sunlight, flowed on its way to where we last gave it greeting—below the cell of the Hermit of Warkworth; dipped down, and then rushed the frowning rugged slopes of Simonside, 1,400 feet up. It seemed to me we swooped once more, taking a valley in our stride, and presently we climbed a barrier reef of hills until we reached a series of plateaux where miles of wastes stretch out into misty distances edged by oddly shaped crags and lofty wildernesses of heather and gorse. A region lonely as the steppes, and greyly desolate. On the summits of the many hills of Simonside ancient British camps, barrows, and circles have been found—our maps indicated the positions. I placed one on the crest of a granitic ridge, where the distant company of dark stones hung like a swallow's nest.

Now we zigzagged up to the highest spot yet touched upon, where rain clouds surged and the winds whistled. One got an idea of what these moors look like in winter. I saw no landmarks such as you find on the Lammermuir Hills to guide wayfarers over snow-sheeted paths. There were but few signs of life. Over the wastes hovered small companies of pied lapwings, whose dappled haphazard flight haunts these desolations with frequent cries of complacent despair, and a kestrel soared afar with his rapid wing movement, and his half-laughing call which seemed the epitome of this wilderness.

In a cleft valley the skeleton of a biggish house stood outlined, looking ever so out of place in its surroundings. It was not very old and it was not very young, and why or wherefore it should have been built where it was puzzled us mightily. We decided to lunch in the ruins, sheltered from the winds by a fragmentary piece of masonry that might have been a pele-tower once upon a time. On the lee side we found marks of many fires. It was not the first time that gipsies had made bivouac there.

Across Elsdon Common, beloved of witches, to Elsdon, where the fine old battlemented rectory-house is worth stopping to see. The circular staircase in one corner is interesting, as is also the peculiarly arched lower story. On the frontage the weather-worn arms of the Umfravilles appear, as they do upon the pele-rectory of Whitton at Rothbury.

Robert de Umfraville came over with the Conqueror, and the wide lands of Prudhoe were granted to him. Prudhoe Castle is a far cry from Elsdon, being on the Tyne, near Wylam, but this opportunity of saying something of a famous family is not to be missed. Their ramifications were many, and thus one finds their arms on strongholds and towers remote from their headquarters, which was Prudhoe. Odinel de Umfraville built the castle there in the twelfth century on a high ridge commanding a look-out downstream and up. There were builders' strikes even in his day. The men of Wylam, one of the manors of Prudhoe, refused to take part in building operations, for Wylam had been granted aforetime to St. Oswyn's Church at Tynemouth, and none but the Prior himself could demand service. Prudhoe Castle faced onslaughts with equanimity—its strength and position was such that it took more reducing than most. On one occasion the ravening Scots, under William the Lion, destroyed the growing crops around, and stripped the bark from the fruit trees—after the fashion of the Hunnish invaders of France in recent times.

The most interesting Umfraville of all was Edward the Second's right-hand man at Bannockburn. I owe this Umfraville a debt I can never repay. He was one of the few bright spots in the heavy-weight history-book that blighted the days of my youth. What do the lucky children of the present with their

pictorial inducements to study know of all the dull and wearisome schoolbooks of Victorian times! The scene was the field of Bannockburn, and that a child had to imagine for itself. I had never been to Bannockburn, but I needs must place the contending armies somewhere, and there seemed so little space upon my island. I solved the difficulty by plotting Edward at the tip of Langness Point, and Bruce occupied the curve of the peninsula as it flings out to sea, and having got them well arranged I let the play begin. Bruce ordered his men to kneel in prayer, and very humbly they bent the knee before the God of battles. And Edward, wondering, looked at the reverent thousands—"Sir knight," he said, "behold! Yon men kneel to ask mercy." "You say truth, sire," replied Sir Ingram de Umfraville. "They ask mercy—but not of thee!"

The widow of an Umfraville, marrying a Percy, took Prudhoe Castle into the possession of that great family hundreds of years ago. It is in most excellent repair, and to see it, as I did recently, with modern short curtains of very white Nottingham lace adorning the age-old deep-set windows, is to realize what a graft of Suburbia will do for a twelfth-century stronghold. It is really wonderful!

What a digression! I must get back to Elsdon—I haven't half finished with Elsdon.

The appearance of the church at Elsdon is like many another in Northumberland. It is low and

smallish and narrow spreading, with an acre or more of churchyard where, beneath rough stones upon which symbols of war and peace are engraved, rest generations of the men of Redesdale, ever the foremost raiders. Long years ago, when clearing away earth from the north transept of the church, workmen came upon a little army of dead, lying in double rows, the skull of one between the thigh bones of another.

Elsdon church, in 1760, had as vicar a Dr. Dodgson, whose wit and skill with a pen descended to his great-grandson, the author of the immortal Alice of Looking-Glass and Wonderland fame. Dr. Dodgson was presented to the living by the then Earl of Northumberland, and the letters written by the reverend gentleman on his taking possession of the rectory are addressed to members of the Percy family. They give a most amusing glimpse into the primitive conditions of life prevailing in remote areas in the middle of the seventeenth century, and for this reason I quote the passages that best illustrate the padre's state of mind. Needless to say, Elsdon did not keep the brilliant Dr. Dodgson long.

"ELSDON,
"*March* 28th, 1762.

"MY DEAR MR. PERCY,

"I am obliged to you for promising to write to me, but don't give yourself the trouble of sending any letters to this place, for 'tis almost impossible to re-

ceive 'em without sending a messenger sixteen miles to fetch 'em, and nothing is so difficult to be procured as a messenger. . . . I am obliged to be my own surgeon, apothecary, and physician, for there is not a creature of that profession within sixteen miles of this place: 'tis impossible to describe the oddity of my situation at present, which, however, is not void of some pleasant circumstances. A clog-maker combs out my wig upon my curate's head by way of a block, and his wife powders it with a dredging-box. The vestibule of the castle is a low stable, above it is the kitchen in which are two beds, joining to each other, the curate and his wife lay in one and Margery the maid in the other. I lay in the parlour between two beds to keep me from being frozen to death, for as we keep open house the winds enter from every quarter and are apt to creep into bed with one.

"I remain, etc.,

"DODGSON."

The following letter is so amusing and descriptive, I make no apology for including much of it. By the time he got to March 30th Dr. Dodgson had endured as much Elsdon as he could bear.

"ELSDON,

"*March 30th.*

"MY LORD,

"Elsdon was once a market town as some say, and a city according to others; but as the annals of the parish were lost several centuries ago, 'tis impossible

to determine in what age it was either the one or the other. There are not the least traces of its former grandeur to be found, whence some antiquarians are apt to believe that it lost both its trade and character at the deluge. Most certain it is, that the oldest man in the parish never saw a market here in his life. Modern Elsdon, my lord (for I am not now speaking of the Antediluvian city of the same name), is a very small village consisting of a tower which the inhabitants call a castle, an inn for the refreshment of Scotch carriers, five little farm houses, and a few wretched cottages, about ten in all, inhabited by poor people who receive the parish allowance, and superannuated shepherds. . . . In the centre stands the church, which is very small, without either a tower or a spire; however, the west end is not devoid of an ornamental superstructure. An Elsdonic kind of cupola forms a proper place for a belfry, and the only bell which is in it is almost as loud as that which calls your lordship's labourers to dinner at Sion. . . . The greater part of the richest farmers are Scotch dissenters, and go to a meeting-house at Birdhope-crag, about ten miles from Elsdon. Their religion descends from father to son and is rather a part of the personal estate than the result of reasoning or the effects of enthusiasm—those who live near Elsdon come to the church, those at a greater distance towards the west go to the meeting-house at Birdhope-crag. Others, both churchmen and presbyterians at a very great

distance, go to the nearest church or conventicle in a neighbouring parish. There is a very good understanding between the parties, for they not only intermarry with each other, but frequently do penance together in a white sheet, with a white wand, barefoot, in one of the coldest churches in England, and at the coldest season of the year: I dare not finish the description for fear of bringing on a fit of the ague. Indeed, my lord, the ideas of sensation are sufficient to starve a man to death, without having recourse to those of reflection. If I was not assured by the best authority upon earth that the world was to be destroyed by fire, I should conclude that the day of destruction is at hand. There is not a single tree or hedge now within twelve miles to break the force of the wind; it sweeps down like a deluge from hills capped with everlasting snow and blasts almost the whole country into one continued barren desert. It's impossible to sally out of the castle and to make my quarters good in a warmer habitation. I have lost the use of everything but my reason, tho' my head is entrenched in three nightcaps, and my throat, which is very bad, is fortified with a pair of stockings twisted in the form of a cravat. As washing is very cheap I wear two shirts at a time, and for want of a wardrobe hang my great coat upon my own back. There is to be a hopping on Thursday se'nnight. A hopping, my lord, is a ball, the constant conclusion of a pedlar's fair. Upon these celebreties there is a great

concourse of braw lads and lasses, who throw off their wooden shoes, shod with plates of iron, and put on Scotch nickerers, which are made of horse leather, the upper part of which is sewed to the sole without being welted. . . .

"I am, etc.,

"DODGSON.

"P.S.—The manner in which a herd (shepherd) lives upon the moors, especially in bad weather, will draw tears from your lordship's eyes, when it is described in the most simple manner. I wish I had not stumbled upon the remembrance of it. If a tear is due to misery—if—I am glad I cannot proceed for want of paper. I'll now sit down and do what your lordship would have done if I had finished this story."

In a by-lane, running beside a burn, a picturesque shepherd lad paced up and down, playing a set of Northumberland small pipes. There are still a fair number of players, but one mostly hears them in the pit villages, and the opportunity of listening to a good piper was the last thing we could have hoped to find in Elsdon. Needless to say, I was out of the car in a minute, and introducing myself, the musician allowed me to handle the instrument as I plied him with questions about it. The bagpipe he was using was obviously old, though not so aged as a prototype found in an Egyptian mummy case of which my

friend told me. The evolved article is a development of the primitive reed pipe, and consists of three essential parts, the wind-bag, the chanter or melody pipe, with lateral fingering holes, and the ground bass note.

I have heard experts say that the dulcimer of the Book of Daniel should be rendered bagpipe. The Romans brought the pipes to old Britain, and the two varieties, the great and the small, spread rapidly among the southern tribes. In the great pipes the wind was blown into the bag from the mouth, and in the small pipes it was supplied by bellows worked under the arm. The great bagpipes were for battle or war marching, and also for festivities on a large scale held in the open air. The small pipes were for family or domestic use. The great war pipes, that spread at length to Ireland and the Scottish highlands, were continued there long after they had died out in England, but the small kind lingered on in Lincolnshire and Northumberland and other remote corners, and were improved from time to time. Their highest development was reached in France in the sixteenth century, when they became popular for a period in Court circles. To what extent these delightful small pipes of Pan are being made and used to-day I cannot tell, but they are super-excellent in the music they make.

Otterburn, not so very far from Elsdon village, is the scene of the great battle in the moonlight upon

which was built up the ballad of Chevy Chase. Of this conflict Froissart said: "Of all the bataylles and encountrynges that I have made mencion of heretofore in all this my story, great or small, this bataylle was one of the sorest and best foughten without corwards or fainteheartes; for there was neither knight nor squier but that did his deyvore and foughte hande to hande."

It was indeed "a great bataylle," and full of all those flickers of romance which lit up the fights of ancient days. They had time for little courtesies, time to knight each other, time to make up life-long feuds at sight of some act of courage — modern warfare does not permit of these pleasantries. The unhurried Douglas could expire gracefully at Otterburn thanking God he had not died in bed, giving orders, fine, resonant orders such as: "Raise my banner which lieth near me on the ground, show my state neither to friend nor foe lest mine enemies rejoice and my friends be discomforted."

To the dead Douglas, according to tradition, Hotspur surrendered—was ever so stirring a tale! Said Sir Philip Sydney: "I never hear the old story of Percy and Douglas that I find not my heart more moved than by a trumpet."

We located the green fields of the battle scene, and also a wood where we found a rough memorial stone said to mark the exact spot where Earl Douglas lay dead. Inconsequently enough the rough shaft is

known as Percy's Cross. Not far off is a stone seat, not ancient and not new, and upon the back these words are cut: "In these fields, on August 19, 1388, the battle of Otterburn was fought, and deeds were done which in the noblest of English ballads live immortally recorded."

Otterburn was the chief stronghold of the Halls, one of the many important clans of Redesdale, great fighters all, and celebrated in old annals as "the fause Ha's," and alluded to by Scott in *Rokeby*.

> Do not thy native dales prolong
> Of Percy Reed the tragic song,
> Trained forward to his bloody fall
> By Girsonfield, the treacherous Hall.

Girsonfield was a farmhouse standing on the Otter burn, and there some of the "false-hearted Ha's" lived, notably one who affected to be a close friend of Percival Reed, keeper of Redesdale under the Warden of the Marches. The day came when Percival, or Parcie as he is always called in ballad and story, called on a party of his supporters to accompany him on an expedition against the Croziers from over the Border, and the little force set out. Tradition says that the fause Ha' secretly damped the inside of Reed's musket, and that it burst at the first fire, but the generally accepted version is that Hall betrayed Parcie Reed into the hands of the enemy, who slew him brutally at Batenshope. All versions agree that

the murder was compassed and brought about by the clan Hall.

The spirit of poor Parcie Reed could find no rest, but wandered over Redesdale in many forms. It ranged on the banks of the Rede, between Todlawhaugh and Pringlehaugh:

> Oft by the Pringle's haunted side
> The shepherd sees his spectre glide.

It was a courteous phantom, flitting about by night and roosting on a tree by day. It was rather attached to the mill at Todlaw, ruinous now, and often as the people went to the meeting-house of which Parson Dodgson wrote so feelingly they saw the lonely thing, when they would uncover their heads and bow reverently, and the polite spirit bowed in return. At last someone gifted with the power of laying to rest troubled spirits came to the unlucky Parcy Reed's assistance, and after the "certain time" had expired —it always took "a certain time" to lay disembodied spirits—the bird-like haunter of the Pringle was never seen again.

The fause Ha's left Redesdale, driven from thence by their neighbours, and for generations every Northumbrian Hall supplemented an introduction by an assurance that he was no connexion of the fause Ha's of Otterburn. Troughend, where Percy Reed resided, is not the same house which sheltered him. His roof-tree was the old pele-tower, the foundations of which

you can discern alongside the big farmhouse which is Troughend in 1923.

Above Otterburn we struck the Watling Street running up from Corbridge, and followed it to the high-set Bremenium, a Roman station, constructed to guard the great road. The walls of the camp in places are still ten feet or more in height, and fine gateways stand firm and fairly intact. The high plateau offers a wonderful vista of wild moor scenery down which the Rede travels from the rugged fells and the lonely glen at Batenshope, which is its source, and the scene of Parcie Reed's killing at the Crozier swords.

Going back upon our tracks the Watling Street took us to Bellingham, and into a region insistent with martial memories. Often through the fighting centre of the wild valleys and tumbling burns the slogan rang:

> Tarret and Tarset head,
> Hard and heather bred,
> Yet—Yet—Yet—!

The Tarset burn joins the Tyne at a point where the more than fragmentary remains of Tarset Tower mark great happenings. Tarset anciently belonged to the forbears of that Red Comyn whom Bruce killed in the kirk at Dumfries, and after the era of the Comyns was the residence of the keeper of the lawless district. Said my lords of the Council: "And here we have thought mete to put you in remembrance of

Tarsett Hall, belonging to the Lord Borrows, and Hawgston, belonging to Sir John Wetheryngton, beyng thought mete places for the keeper of Tindale to live in."

Up to the '15 the men of North Tynedale and Redesdale were referred to in official communications as "the thieves of Tyndale" and from time to time the burgesses of Newcastle were advised to take no apprentices from these reiving dales. The men of the North Tyne and Rede rode raids as successfully as they rode horses. And most keepers preferred to compound with these wild spirits who committed "haynous murders, robberies and ryots," for "if a man of those audacious robbers or kindred were executed, the whole of his name put the suitor at deadly feud."

On the south side of the Tyne, as it nears Bellingham, is Hesleyside, the seat of the Charltons since the time of Edward the Sixth. All good Charltons in the days of feud with Scotland, and "detestable actes" nearer home, had "sworne uppon a book always to take hys parte," and to-day you may see the identical spur which the mistress of Hesleyside was wont to serve up at supper-time as a broad hint that the larder was empty, and would the gallant, plundering lord take heed of it.

Bellingham was the centre for "the pore contre which by the contynell murders and theftes committed by Tynedale and Ridsdale men was near

brought to utter confusion." The Norman church, squat and towerless, dates back to the eleventh century, and its roof is almost unique, being stone-ribbed and stone-flagged, as was best for a building that must so often pass the fire of Border skirmishes, as it did many and many a time, being a fortress and a church alternately. The churchyard is grandly placed, and I love its poise above the Tyne, and the glimpses of the grey bridge and the massed trees of every shade, and, too, the masses of alluring decorations on the gravestones, hammers, skulls, spoons, hour-glasses, arrows, spears, scissors, and the rest. There is also to be seen, among many interesting pages from ancient history, the grave of the robber whose story was told so grimly by James Hogg in the blood-curdling *The Long Pack.*

The Rede, coming down from the wilderness, joined the North Tyne below Bellingham, and passing more than one strong pele, we reached Wark, which is not to be confused with that Wark where "the greate streame of Twede towchithe on the Englyshe grounde as a limes betwene Scotland and it." This is Wark-on-Tyne, once a manor of the Radclyffes, which, on the attainder of Lord Derwentwater, reverted to the Crown and was given to Greenwich Hospital. Here we paused awhile to give greeting to my old friend Abel Chapman, of Houxty, and admire his collection of wild beasts risen from the ashes of their slain selves, staring with glassy eyes on a strange world, or

bottled up in hermetically sealed museum cases with shoulders hunched for the spring that never comes off. I have seen the trophies of most well-known hunters of big game, but few collections surpass that at Houxty, and is the more to be admired because their acquirer is not a head-hunter, but one of our greatest naturalists. Mr. Chapman, in addition to other books, wrote *Wild Spain*, which long since joined the classics.

Chipchase, the ancient home of the Herons, is an imposing Jacobean mansion built by Cuthbert Heron in 1621, and adjoins a pele-tower of massive and unusual proportions, and farther down the dale—no moorlands now, but trees and meadows surrounding famous and rarely beautiful seats—is Haughton Castle, an immense place, and restored. The stronghold was built by William de Swineburn in the thirteenth century, and for hundreds of years stood as the only castle of the region in which were peles and lesser fortified structures by the dozen. Reivers and prisoners of war innumerable have languished in the grim dungeons of Haughton.

Historical places in North Tynedale loom on every side, and I am not able to so much as mention a tithe of them. Let me recommend anybody interested in great records, and old seats still held in the families of those who made Northumbrian history, to make the acquaintance of Hodgson's topographical *Description of Northumberland*, a literary mine of treasure.

When one speaks of "Hexham," of the quaint and narrow streets, it is at once assumed that the abbey is meant, so much the heart of the city is the great priory church, founded by St. Wilfred. A most engaging person, red-robed as becomes a verger of a Chapel Royal, showed us round the abbey with the air and gesture of one taking part in a religious ceremony, which, I am sure, the rite has become. Burnt and plundered again and again, the old church, built upon the foundations and crypt of the monks of Lindisfarne, stands as a perfect masterpiece of early English architecture. To the unskilled in knowledge of fine craftsmanship, such plain-to-be-understood features as the ancient Fridstool, as at Beverley (which undoubtedly stood in Wilfred's Saxon edifice, and was probably the consecration chair for the bishops of Hexham; Camden believed that the Northumbrian kings were crowned in it), and the painted screen decorated with gruesome paintings from the Dance of Death, make most appeal. For myself, a confessed ignoramus in artistic matters, I liked best of all the treasures of the abbey the worn and wide stone staircase in the south transept, by which the monks ascended to their dormitories above, to come down chanting; the crypt, and the Roman memorial stone, nine feet long, found in the foundations of the church. The stairway, seen from a distance, is a feature of great distinction, and there cannot be many like it remaining. I could not

visualize the old monks coming down o' nights to chant and pray—I saw only Lady Macbeth, sleep-walking and rubbing her little hand. It is Lady Macbeth's stairway. Church or not, it was built for her, and had Shakespeare seen it he would have written it into the castle of Dunsinane. The crypt is built up of Roman stones from Corstopitum—Wilfred's masons saved themselves much work and trouble. Dr. Collingwood Bruce held that every stone had passed through Roman hands, and the markings on them are as fresh to-day as though they had just been hewn out of the quarries whence they came. The builders-in took no pains to place significantly marked stones right side up—they sought materials, not memorials; and thus it is a wonderful and thrilling circumstance that caused a slab inscribed to the Emperor Severus, who died at Eburacum (York, A.D. 211), and his two sons, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus and Publius Septimus Geta, to be set in the roof of the crypt of Hexham, so that all might read it and mark the obliteration of Geta's name. On the death of Severus, his two sons together assumed the imperial title, and instead of continuing the campaign against the Caledonians, the two commenced a deadly feud which ended in the murder of Geta by his brother, Caracalla, or more accurately Caracallas, as the Roman people insisted on calling Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, from the fact of his having introduced the Gallic mantle which was known by that name. All

over the empire the names and titles of Emperor Geta were erased from monuments by order of Emperor Caracallas. The arch of Severus at Rome bears the mark of effacement, as do several places in this country, notably the example at Hexham, where you may see for yourself the deep and vicious scoring out of Geta's name.

The other great treasure in Hexham church—these I may tell you form my ideas of treasures, they may quite well not be yours—is the great stone dragged hither by Wilfred's masons from the Roman camp of Corstopitum. No doubt it was valued by them for its size only, and no interest would be taken in the inscription and the fine cutting, which is extraordinarily bold and clear. The relief depicts a horseman in a plumed helmet, and carrying a standard, galloping over a naked little Briton crouching on the ground, whose abject attitude might have inspired the plaint "Less than the dust beneath thy horse's feet." The well-drawn horse has a plume, but no saddle; the gallant young Roman rides on the saddle cloth and spurns stirrups. The hopeless Briton of the bearded face grasps a short sword, and beneath this picture that tells so eloquent a story is a Latin inscription which translated reads thus: "To the gods, the shades, Flavinius, a soldier of the troop of Petriana, standard-bearer of the troop of Candidus, being twenty-five years of age, and having served seven years in the army, is here laid."

Other tombs and epitaphs seem nothing beside it. What is the supposed grave cover of King Elfwald, who was murdered here in A.D. 788, or the oldest Christian monument in the abbey, dating from 1066, inscribed "Johannes malerbe jacet hic," to this lettered stone of Flavinius?

High on a wall hung the helmet of a Fenwick who fell at Marston Moor, reminding us in a roundabout way of the challenge that Border warriors regarded as the test of courage—the hanging of a glove over the altar at Hexham, a romantic custom that made infinite appeal to Sir Walter Scott:

> Edmund, thy years were scarcely mine,
> When challenging the clans of Tyne
> To bring their best my brand to prove,
> O'er Hexham's altar hung my glove.
> But Tynedale nor in tower nor town
> Had champion meet to take it down.

Facing the abbey on the west side of the market-place, still remarkably picturesque, is the old Moot-hall, beneath the arch of which we motored out of the town. The ancient building has fine towers each side of the gothic archway, and the corbels for siege platforms, and arrow-windows, tell of the strange scenes and wild that were enacted in the square. Here the Duke of Somerset was executed by the Yorkists after the second battle of Hexham which followed on the disastrous reverse suffered by Queen Margaret's mixed force of Scots and French.

HEXHAM ABBEY.

In the lovely woods of Dipton, or Deepdene, through which the Dipton burn runs asplash, the Queen and her little son hid away in the cave of the Robin-Hood-like personage who befriended the fugitives. To see the cave, now almost overgrown, where Queen Margaret lay hidden, we passed over the old bridge at Linnels with its time-worn inscription so difficult to make out: "God preserve Wilfred Erengton who built this bridge, 1530."

It was an Errington of Beaufront who took part in the great Jacobite adventure with Lord Derwentwater, you will remember. Not the first warlike essay of an Errington, nor the last.

And so through the smiling valley of the Derwent to Blanchland, perhaps the quaintest and most medieval village in England. Besant in his novel *Dorothy Forster* said the ground-plan of it reminded him of a decayed college. It has a far-away resemblance to the close of an ancient cathedral.

There is a fortified gate through which you enter, and doubtless in the hey-day of Blanchland's greatness a second arch stood at the south outlet where now is the open road leading to a picturesque stone bridge across the Derwent. The cottages standing around the old-world square are as antique as any to be met with in Northumberland, and have in many cases flagged roofs. The Abbey of Blanchland, so well hidden away that it was passed again and again by would-be sackers and destructionists, was the founda-

tion of twelve canons, whose Abbot was summoned to the parliaments of 1294 and 1295. In later days, after the suppression, it became the property of the Forsters of Bamburgh. In the remarkable church, and doubly remarkable by reason of its open door, Edward the Third confessed and heard Mass. The refectory of the monks is the kernel of the manor house which is now the "Crewe Arms Hotel," a comfortable auberge well known as a scene chosen by Besant for his novel *Dorothy Forster*.

And here we part. They tell me there is but little more to see between Blanchland and Healey—that little more, and oh, how much it is! For what section of Northumberland is without interest? All this long journey we have felt with Robert Louis the Beloved how much better it is to travel hopefully than to arrive, half trusting we should never "get there," half counting upon the wander turning into the "ever and ever" of fairy-tales. Alas, all things have an end (the "alas" is mine).

And so we part.

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